Comics Underground Japan

"The Japanese invented the comic strip and are still at it. I've always dug and been influenced by the graphic wizardry of manga. This new anthology is a BLAST, the more disturbing, the better. I especially like Yasuji Tanioka (Gary Panter, eat your heart out!)."
—S. CLAY WILSON

"Japanese comics are so refreshing; like dripping flowers in the rain they show many faces; they don't all try to be roses. There are some happy, knobby, leafy, pungent blooms in the Japanese woodland. Lucky for us."
—CARY PANTER

"Blast Books once again provides a glorious selection of Japan's underground masters. My personal favorite is Kazuichi Hanawa's rich historical grotesque 'Mercy Flesh.'"
—JOE COLEMAN

COMICS UNDERGROUND JAPAN presents the wild, subversive world of Japan's most accomplished underground comics artists. Some of the dozen artists included in this anthology will be familiar to followers of manga; others make their American debut in these pages. The richly imaginative stories in this volume show a great range of graphic style, from painstakingly detailed draftsmanship to exuberant, maniacal renderings. At the heart of each work in this anthology is a unique personal vision and a fierce artistic compulsion—these manga artists are the misfits of the art form, and they are its visionaries.

YOSHIKAZU EBISU
KAZUICHI HANAWA
HIDESHI HINO
SUEHIRO MARUO
PAN MIGIWA
NEKOJIRU & HAJIME YAMANO
TAKASHI NEMOTO
CAROL SHIMODA
YASUJI TANIOKA
MASAKAZU TOMA
MUDDY WEHARA
HANAKO YAMADA

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Comics Underground Japan

Comics Underground JAPAN

BLAST BOOKS

EDITED BY KEVIN QUIGLEY

Comics Underground Japan

Comics Underground

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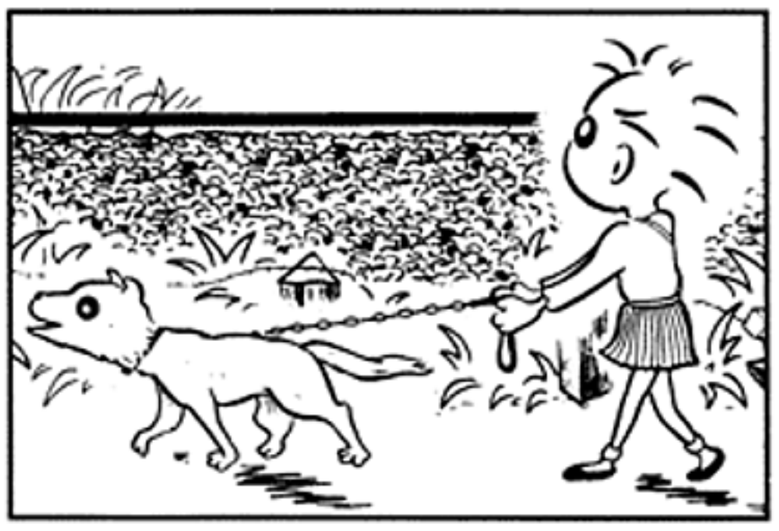
KEVIN
QUIGLEY

TRANSLATED FROM
THE JAPANESE BY
HIROKO & KEVIN QUIGLEY
AND YOKO UMEZAWA



BLAST BOOKS
New York

JAPAN

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"Jiniku" *Garo* Aug. 1986 Seirindo © Kazuichi Hanawa

"Waraikorogashi" *Circus Kitan* 1991 Shueisha © Hideshi Hino

"Nihonjin no Wakusei" *Ginsei Club* 1985 Peyotoru Kobo © Suehiro Maruo

"Volvox" *Garo* Feb.–Mar. 1993 Seirindo © Pan Migiwa

"Nekojiruudon Tamashii no maki" *Garo* Dec. 1991 Seirindo © Nekojiru

"Mirai Seishi Brazil" *Garo* issued in June, July, and Aug. 1991 Seirindo © Takashi Nemoto

"Lemon no Koi"; "Carol no Natsuyasumi" *Ultra Minor* Apr. 1985 JICC Corporation © Carol Shimoda

"Yasuji no Don Quixote" *Shide-yo-desukoto* Sep. 1983 Seirindo © Yasuji Tanioka

"Tekkan mae no Yuutsu" *Garo* Oct. 1992 Seirindo © Masakazu Toma

"Chou Oogata Yonkoma Manga Sonoichi" *Garo* Aug. 1986 Seirindo; "Chou Oogata Yonkoma Manga Sononi"; "Banana" *Quettaybang* Apr. 1987 Seirindo both © Muddy Wehara

"Maria no Komon" *Lead Comic* May 1990 to Mar. 1991 Lead Shuppan © Hanako Yamada

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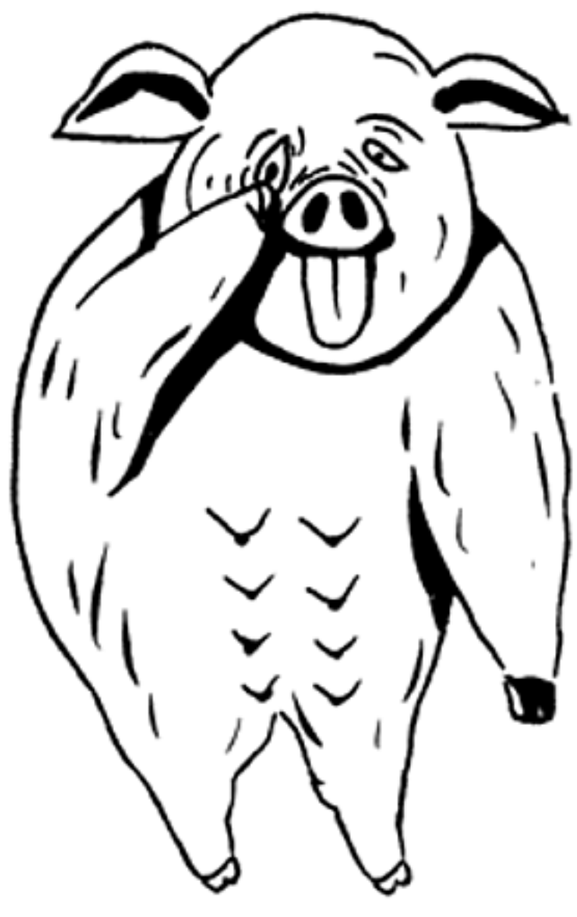

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Thanks to all the artists included in *Comics Underground Japan* for the opportunity to publish their work in English. Special thanks to Chikao Shiratori at *Garo* for his invaluable assistance in bringing all the materials together to create this volume. My wife, Hiroko, acted as tireless translator, interpreter, and international go-between, and led me to all the right places in the Japanese bookstores, and to her I am especially grateful. Thanks also to our co-translator, Yoko Umezawa, who also put in time as east-west liaison, while contributing her shrewd insights toward this book's selections. I am also indebted to Manabu and Keiko Yuasa for sharing their intelligence and enthusiasm (as well as giving me access to their wonderful library), and for introducing me to Takashi Nemoto. My appreciation also goes to Motoko Haita, so generous with her time and knowledge. Motoko gave me my first copy of *Garo* and led me to Mandarake, the marvelous used-manga store in Tokyo. Thanks go too to Linda Hayashi, Don Kennison, and Hiroo Yamagata for their generous help in producing this book. And many thanks to Blast's publishers, Laura Lindgren and Ken Swezey, who before I even approached them, had resolved to make a book such as this, and who were a major part of this project from the beginning. And, finally, I regret that it is too late to thank the man who started it all, *Garo*'s founding editor, Katsuichi Nagai, who died January 4, 1996, at the age of seventy-four.

Kevin Quigley

INTRODUCTION

"What a hideous and polluted land I have come to unawares!"
From the Japanese creation myth of Izanagi and Izanami

OUT OF THE GARBAGE CAN

In 1962 Katsuichi Nagai, age forty-one and suffering his third bout with tuberculosis since the war's end, lay in a Tokyo hospital bed and bargained with fate. If he could get out of this alive, he would return, he vowed, to the real work—publishing manga (he had abandoned it a few years earlier to open a bar)—and would produce a magazine unrivaled in its creativity, sincerity, and strangeness.

Nagai had spent the war years serving in Manchuria as a topographer, and upon returning to a devastated homeland in 1946, he naturally drifted into the printing trade. The field, like everything else in war-torn Japan, was wide open. An anything-goes atmosphere prevailed in those early, chaotic days, and in keeping with the times, the contents of Nagai's first magazines were culled from the warehouse garbage cans of other publications. In retrospect this seems an entirely appropriate beginning for the future publisher of what would become the manga world's salon des refusés, *Garo* magazine.

A near-deathbed conversion notwithstanding, *Garo* might never have come into existence were it not for a fortuitous meeting between Nagai and a young *mangaka* (comics artist) whose work the publisher had seen and admired a few years earlier. The artist, Shirato Sampei, was the son of a controversial illustrator known for championing Communist causes. From an early age Sampei was immersed in the ethos of class struggle. As a young artist he drew inspiration from the newly emerging manga genre known as *gekiga* (literally, "drama pictures"). Like Japan's films of the same period, gekiga looked to the European model of neorealism and to American film noir to create an unprecedentedly "adult" style of graphic storytelling. Such formerly taboo subjects as prostitution, the black market, and illegal abortions all became grist for the artist's mill. The genre of gekiga was able to thrive because of the recent flourishing of the rental library system, which was established in conscious opposition to mainstream monthlies. Working specifically for library-intended publications, an artist whose style or outlook might be deemed too dissonant for the average manga reader was given new life. Sampei was just beginning

to put his own gutsy, rejuvenating twist on the traditional Samurai genre when he walked one day into Nagai's office. Motivated by the publisher's empathy for his work, as well as by his uncustomary willingness to pay for manga pages upon receipt, Sampei tied his fate to Nagai's and goaded him toward the materialization of his dream publication.

Nagai was so impressed by Sampei's work that he named his monthly anthology after a martyred hero in one of the artist's stories, and *Garo* magazine premiered in July 1964. The first issues were almost exclusively a showcase for Shirato Sampei's ongoing Samurai drama, "Kamui." Coinciding with growing social unrest and campus protests in the 1960s (most of which were in opposition to the many treaties Japan was signing with the United States), the "Kamui" series became wildly popular among college students and teenagers. The incorruptible ninja, Kamui, became their lodestar in the war against oppression. On more than a few college campuses Kamui-emblazoned banners were unfurled from the windows of student-seized buildings.

Garo soon branched out to feature the work of other mangaka, including the very best of the original gekiga artists: Yoshihiro Tatsumi–who is credited with coining the term *gekiga*–Shoichi Sakurai, Tadao Tsuge, and, finally Tsuge's older brother, one of the indisputable giants in the world of comics, Yoshiharu Tsuge. Added to this mix, *Garo* was credited throughout the sixties with discovering and promoting many of the most talented new–and most oddly obsessed–mangaka in the country. It spawned a number of short-lived imitators (the two best, *Com*–started by Osamu Tezuka–and *Comic Baku,* each lasted only a few years but have achieved legendary status among underground manga enthusiasts), and at its peak in 1971, *Garo*'s circulation was over eighty thousand.

With the growing social malaise of the 1970s and early eighties, *Garo*'s popularity, not unlike that of the American undergrounds, declined. By 1984 circulation barely tipped five thousand, and rumors of the magazine's imminent demise were rife. Nevertheless, *Garo* continued to introduce many of Japan's most outrageous and darkly visionary new mangaka. Three among the best and most influential of those who premiered in *Garo*'s pages in the early seventies are included in this volume: Kazuichi Hanawa, Yasuji Tanioka, and the mangaka turned TV star, Yoshikazu Ebisu.

FUNKY STUFF

Punk was an international cataclysm: Japanese youth heard the Sex Pistols too, and along with the music and the attitude, a graphic style was born. Terry Johnson, aka Teruhiko Yumura, aka King Terry, was already a designer-illustrator in great demand when in the late seventies he was

lured to *Garo*. Terry's enticement was the cover page: it would be his—every month—to do with as he pleased. Along with his American counterpart Gary Panter, and the French artists Bruno Richard and Pascal Doury, Johnson became a superstar of an exuberant new style. In Japan they called it "Heta Uma"—"it's good when it's bad."

Following Johnson's example, a new generation of *Garo* artists began to find their voices. Johnson's 1976 absurdist epic, "Jonetsu no Penguin Gohan" ("Penguin Food Passion"), coauthored with Itoi Shigesato, is described by many of the new breed in terms usually reserved for gospel or the first issue of *Zap*. These mangaka, first published in the 1980s, make up the bulk of *Comics Underground Japan*.

Since the turn of the century, when the country's writers were forging a new literary style based on the recently translated European models of Maupassant, Zola, and Turgenev, the idea of the group—people with a common vision binding together—has been potent in Japanese art circles. And so it was with King Terry. He gathered together these hungry young mangaka—along with many musicians, writers, and painters in the capital city—under the banner of "Tokyo Funky Stuff." They held dadaist parades, gave themselves American names (Suzy Amakane, Carol Shimoda, and Muddy Wehara, for example, whose works appear in this book), and included pictures of each other as well as transcripts of desultory conversations in their individual books. Most significantly they gave *Garo*, as well as the entire Japanese graphics industry, a much-needed shot in the arm. Today their influence can be seen everywhere from soft-drink labels to municipal signs.

SMALL POTATOES

An enormously wide variety of manga is churned out every week in Japan, but no matter how unique it may seem to the foreign reader, the vast majority of what's published is right down the middle of the road. What is it that separates the manga selected for this book from the mainstream; what makes these manga "underground"? It is not their grotesquery or outlandish violence, nor is it their unabashed depictions of sex. All of that is to be found in the most popular boys' weekly anthologies. One difference between works like those included in this book and the majority of most manga that is so widespread even in the United States is that the undergrounds don't become bestsellers. *Garo* may have managed to work its way back up to a respectable monthly circulation of fifteen thousand, and the current market even seems strong enough to support a new competitor, *Comic Cue* (cover of first issue by Terry Johnson), but compared to Japan's most popular manga weekly, *Shonen Jump,* with six million or so readers, we're talking small potatoes.

What distinguishes the underground is a deeply personal vision, often coupled with a delight in subversion. This is manifested in Yoshikazu Ebisu's hapless and perverse salary men, in Takashi Nemoto's monomaniacal soldier, in Hideshi Hino's circus freaks, and Hanako Yamada's savagely misanthropic office girl; even in the incongruously cute cats of Nekojiru, who in her "Story of a Soul" take on the ultimate authority, Death. More often than not, underground mangaka express a Swiftian horror and disgust with the world. Hell is other people—their innards, their jobs, their masks. Pulsing in the veins of even the most lighthearted of these artists is a strong current of cynicism and—that ever-popular word among Japanese youth—nihilism. But as much as they may loath the world, they are equally riveted. The underground mangaka are compelled to take on the most upsetting and dubious aspects of that highly praised construct, Japanese society. The aggression of the Pacific War, for example—a subject most of their countrymen are all too eager to sweep under the rug—is obsessively dwelled on by two of the artists included here. Takashi Nemoto writes from the point of view of those for whom the war never ended, while Suehiro Maruo presents the reverse outcome of history—in "Planet of the Jap" the Japanese have vanquished America—an outrageous proposition on either side of the ocean.

One divergent work among all this gnashing of teeth is Pan Migiwa's "Volvox." A contemplative and lyrical piece, it is not as tortured as the confessions of her fellow mangaka, though no less obsessive.

To make any of these artists out to be mere raving malcontents would be a gross slighting of their enormous abilities. Above all they love the medium of manga, and their first obligation is to succeed within its limits. While virtually the entire mainstream manga world claims as its progenitor Osamu Tezuka (known in the United States as the creator of Astro Boy and Kimba the White Lion), who pioneered just about every manga style and genre (except—significantly—gekiga), the undergrounders have found more potent inspiration in the works of the visionary children's artist Shigeru Sugiura. Born in 1908, eighteen years before Tezuka, Sugiura was initially influenced by American silent comedies and westerns, as well as early newspaper funnies (he particularly revered Otto Soglow's "The Little King"). Of equal influence were ancient Chinese epics read to him when he was a boy. Add to this an offbeat, painterly style of composition (as opposed to Tezuka's more dynamic "cinematic" style), and the result is perhaps the loveliest, most otherwordly comics ever drawn. Never nearly as famous or prolific as Tezuka, Sugiura eventually disappeared from the scene before being resurrected in the 1970s by Terry Johnson and his avant-garde contemporaries. Though his work has since been reprinted and is available in any good bookstore in Japan, Sugiura is still unknown to most manga fans. As if to cement his reputation as the obscure grand-

father of the underground, this towering artist is nowhere to be found in Frederick Schodt's encyclopedic and ground-breaking English-language study of Japanese comics, *Manga Manga*.

Tezuka's detractors dismiss him as the "Japanese Disney," but in so doing they overlook his prescient and spiritual view of the human condition, as well as the beauty and charm of his panels. Contemporary mangaka have largely disregarded these aspects of his art and have instead chosen to concentrate on his more glaring innovations: cinematic "camera" angles, dynamic page layouts, and illusions of speed–hence the similarity of styles and near-pathological addiction to speed lines. Today's manga have long and sometimes complex narratives, and mainstream manga drawing styles seem devised to propel the reader through the story as efficiently as possible. It is left to the ghettoized artists of *Garo*–as well as to a few other adventurers (such as the immensely popular Momoko Sakura)–to forge new paths. One thing is certain: the work of the underground artists is completely their own. The business of mainstream manga publishing is saddled with a Byzantine editorial process of checking, rechecking, and checking again before the artist can even begin drawing. In every office you will find a sea of editors waiting to have their say. The artists featured in *Comics Underground Japan* are, like their American counterparts, incapable of putting up with such meddling. They are the misfits of the art form, and they are its visionaries. Nihilism may be the envelope, but the envelope bulges with some daring spirits fiercely determined to fly.

Sources

INTERVIEWS

Suzy Amakane, September 1992; Yoshikazu Ebisu, September 1992; Takashi Nemoto, September 1992; Emiko Shimoda, December 1992; June 1995; Chikao Shiratori, September 1992; May 1995; Muddy Wehara, September 1992.

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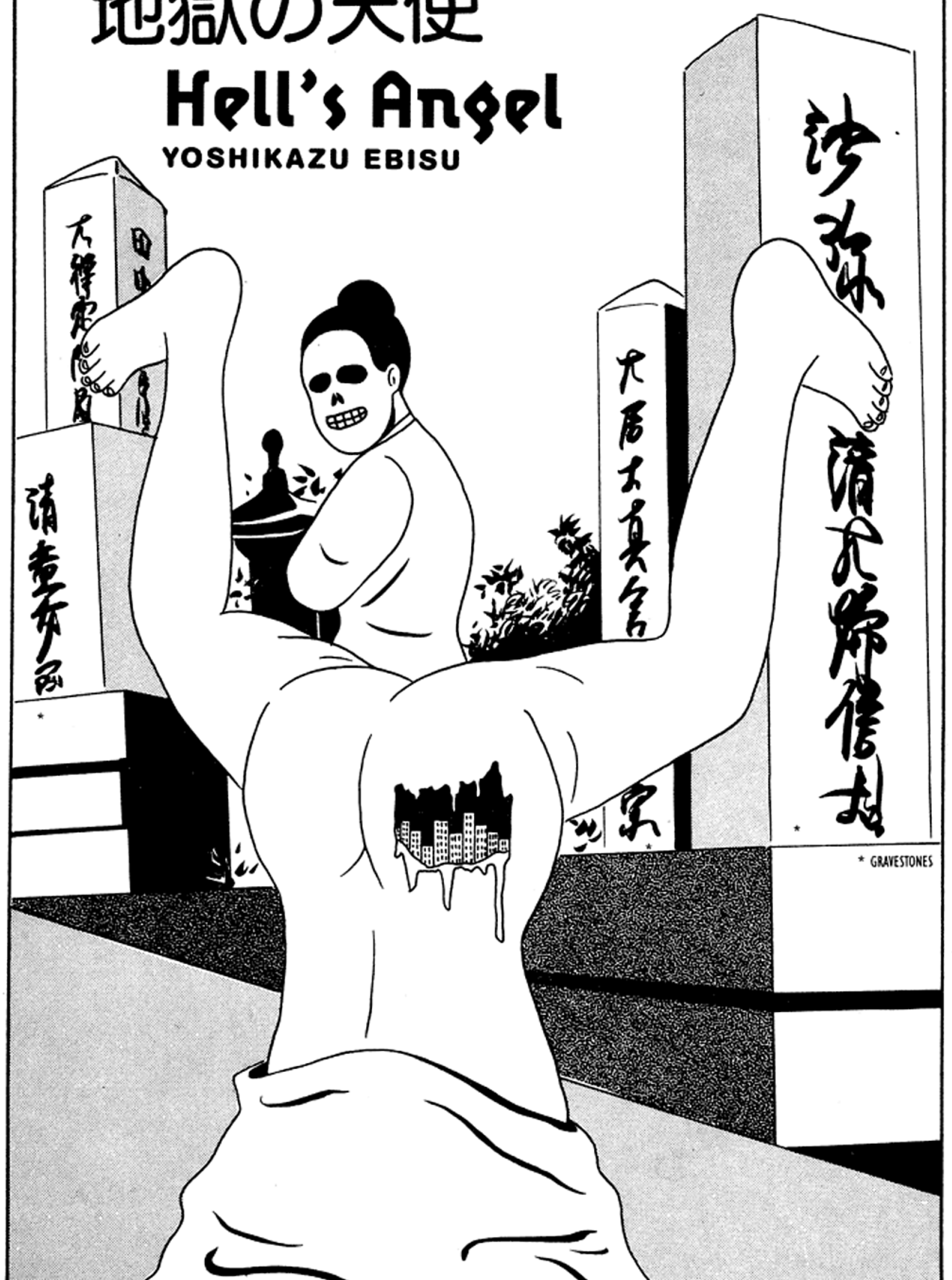
Comics Underground Japan

地獄の天使

Hell's Angel

YOSHIKAZU EBISU



* GRAVESTONES

Coming home from work, I was completely exhausted.

フラ

wobble wobble

フラ

Uhh, Uhh

中華ラーメン

RAMEN

FIRE SAFETY EQUIPMENT

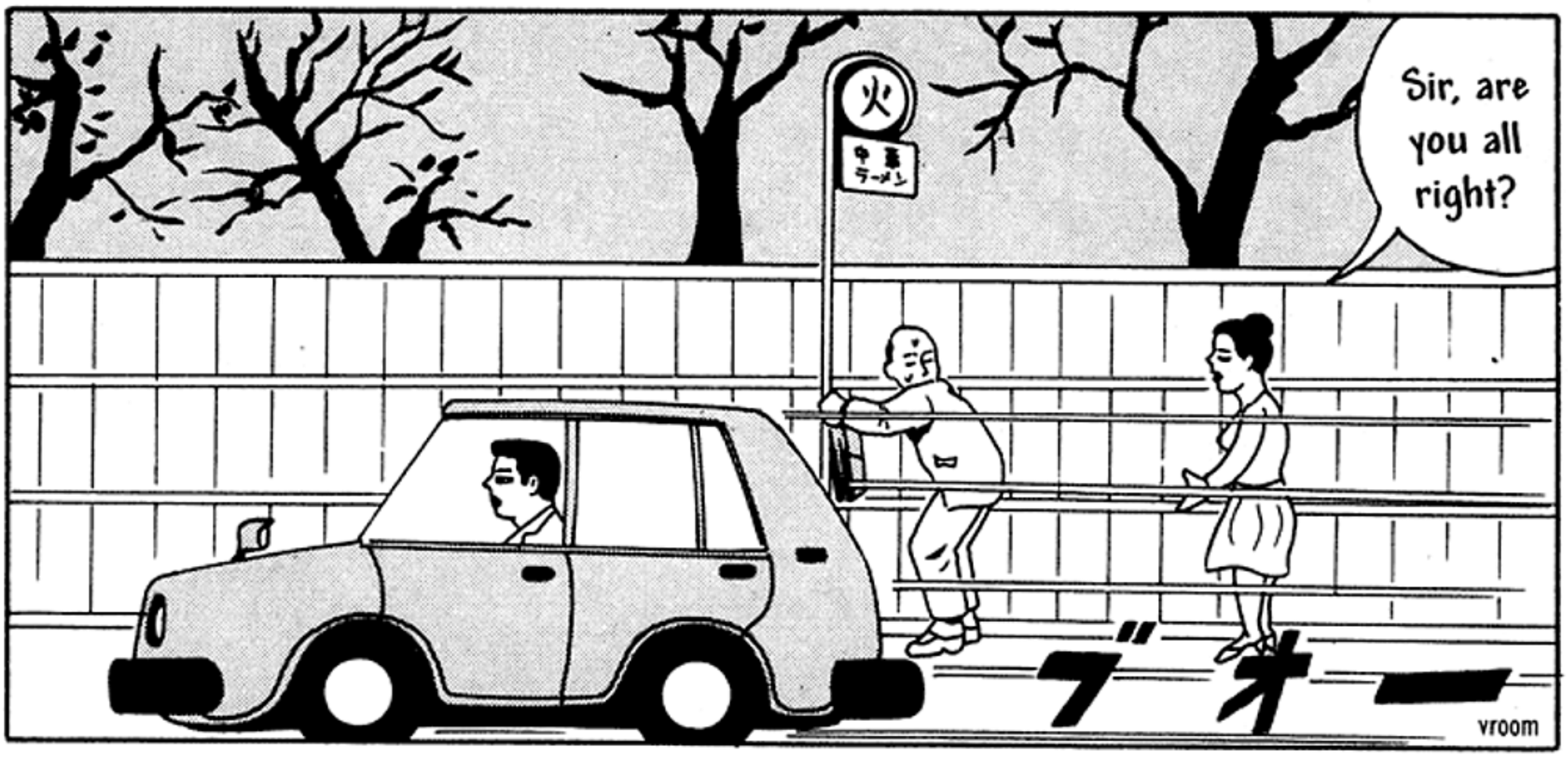
消火器

Whoops

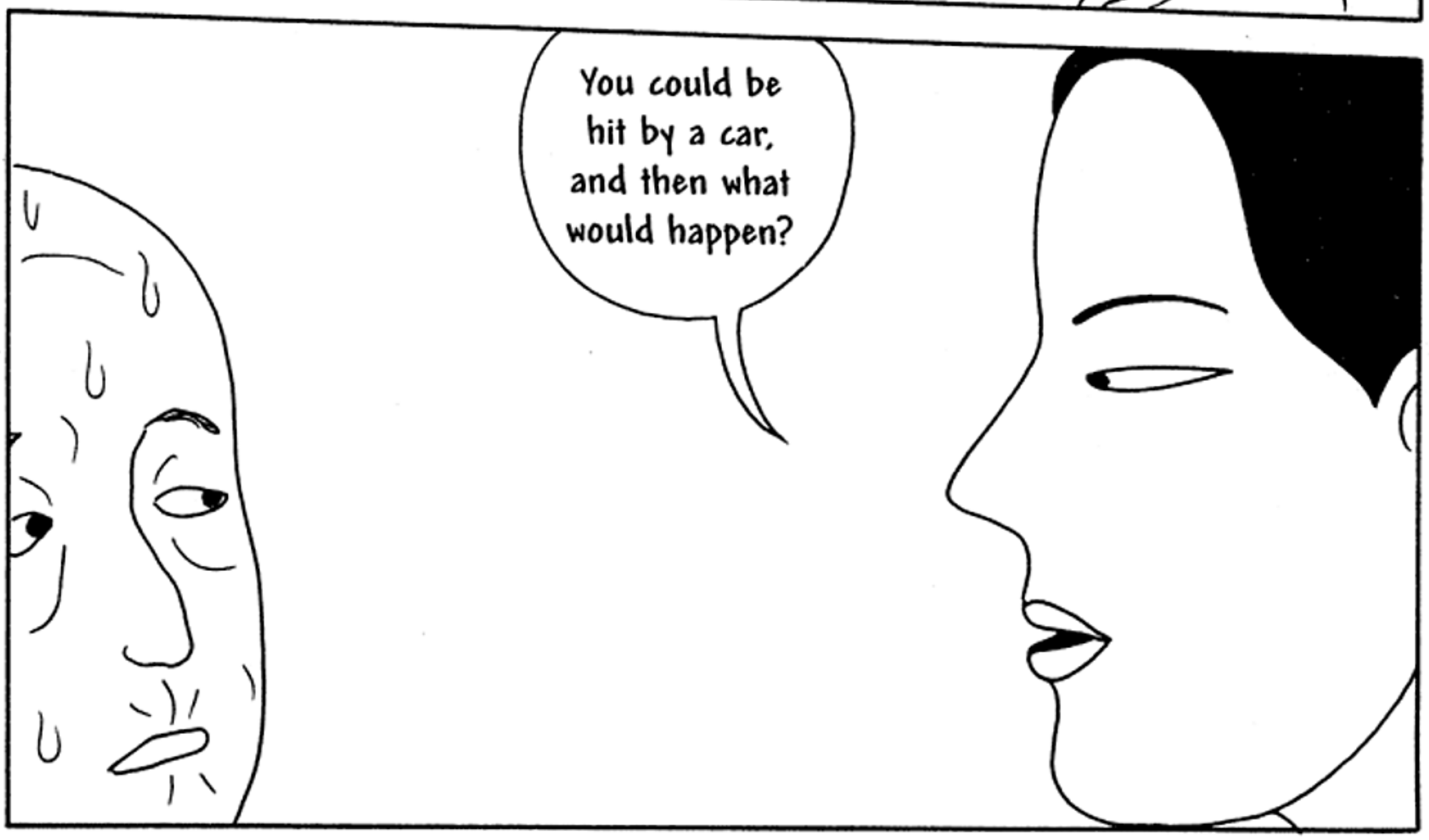
フラ

wobble wobble

フラ


火
中華
ラーメン
Sir, are you all right?
ブオー
vroom

You're walking very unsteadily.


You could be hit by a car, and then what would happen?

vrooom
7"
オ
火
中華
ラーメン

If you got run over from the side, your eyeballs would pop out.
If you got run over face up, your nose would be smashed and blood would spill from your ears.
If you got run over face down, your brains would squish out, your teeth would be crushed, and your neck could even be broken.

I do appre-ciate this.

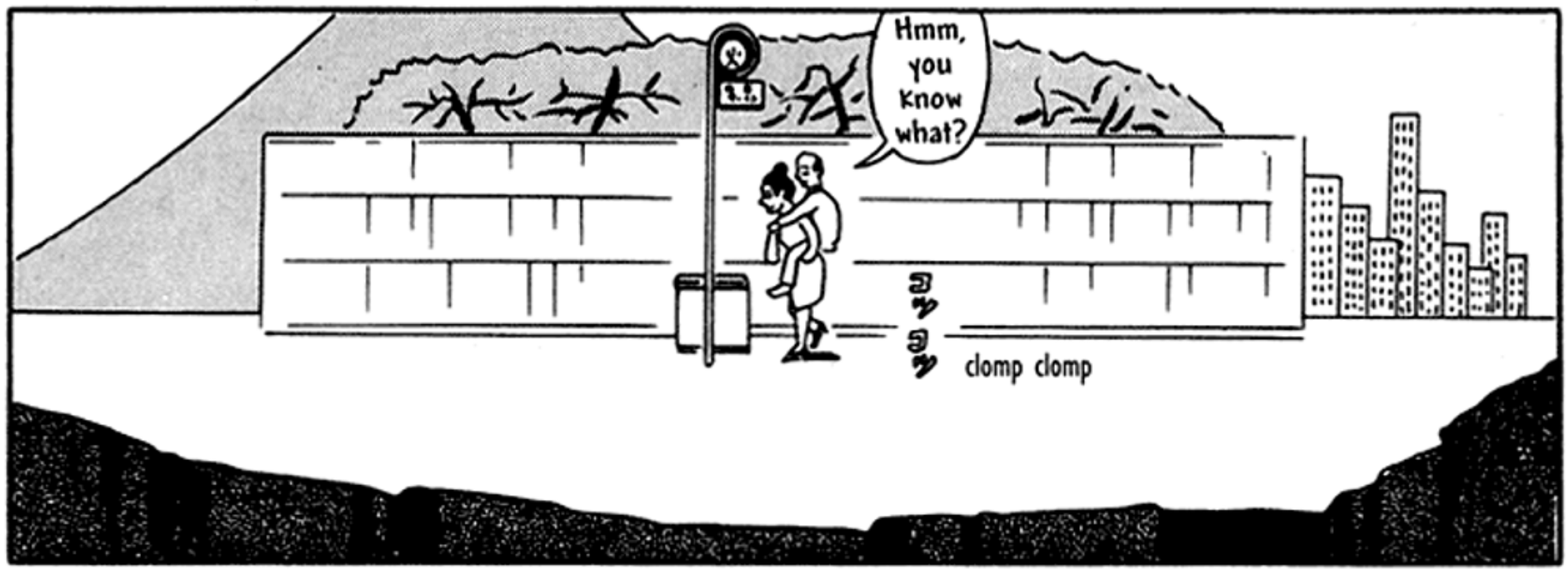
地獄橋
ZIGOKUBASI
HELL BRIDGE

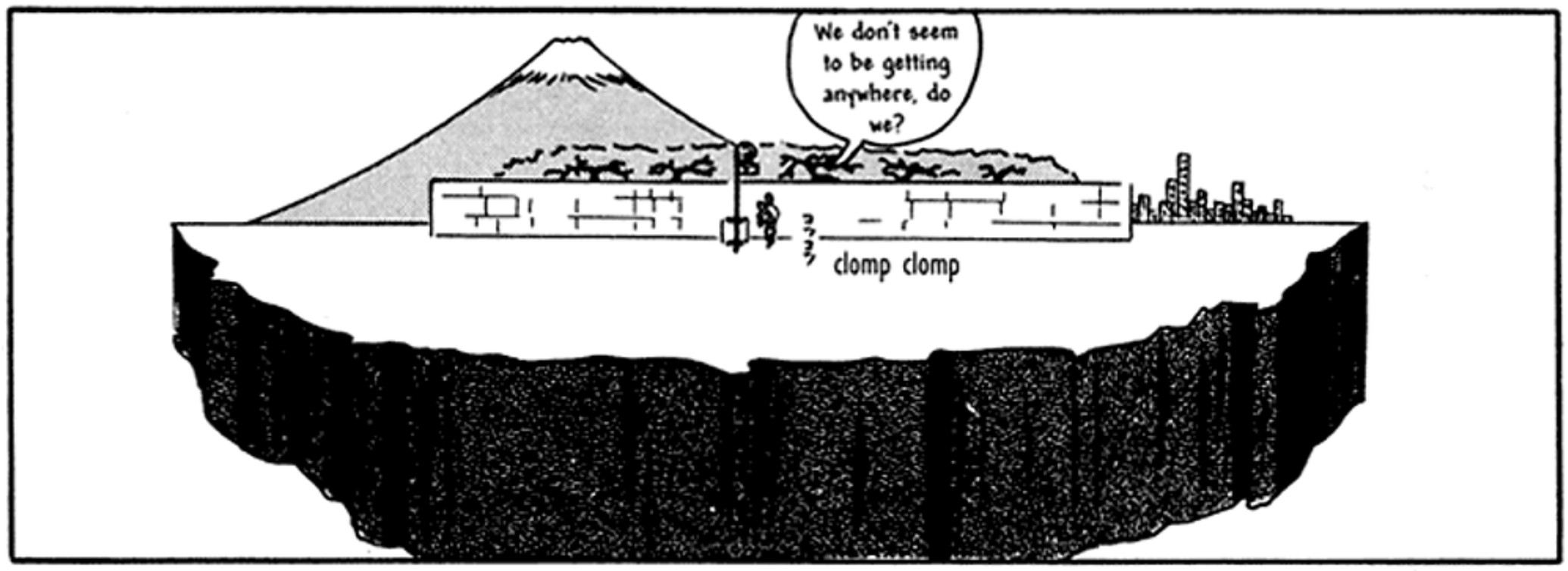
"One act of kindness a day" was their motto, wasn't it.

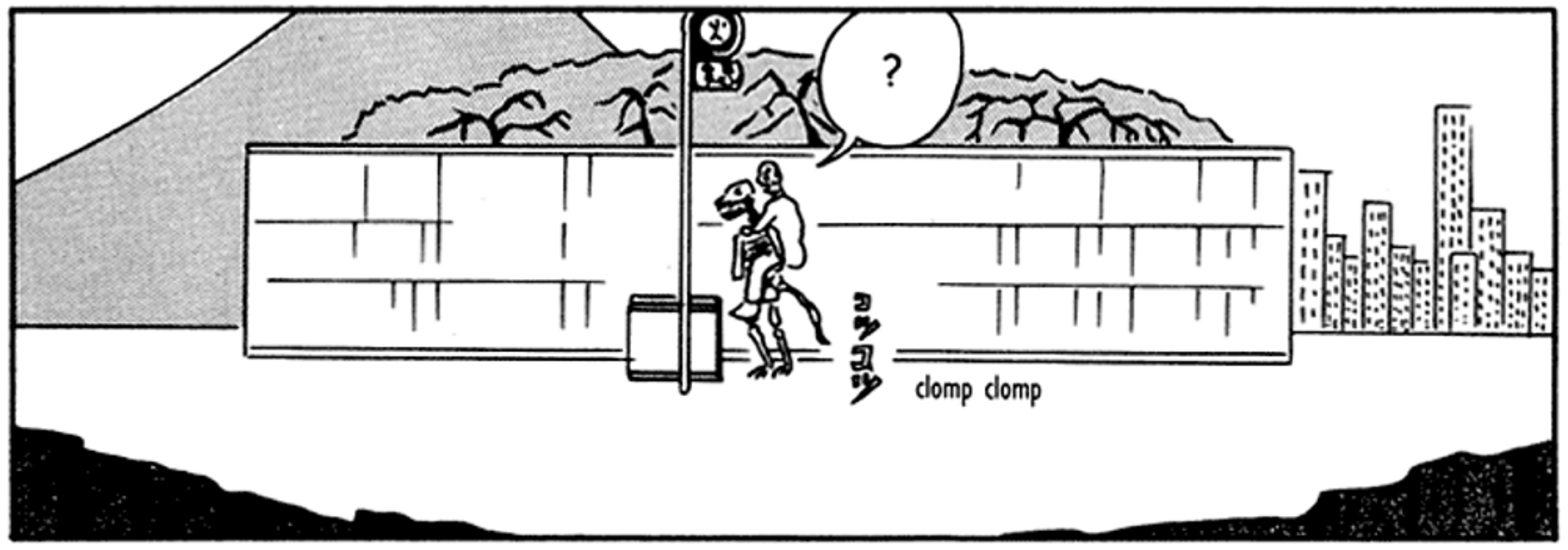
clomp clomp

Remember when there used to be a pop-ular movement called "Show a little kind-ness"?

中華
ラーメン
Those were the days.
コツコツ
clomp clomp


Hmm, you know what?
コツコツ
clomp clomp


We don't seem to be getting anywhere, do we?
clomp clomp

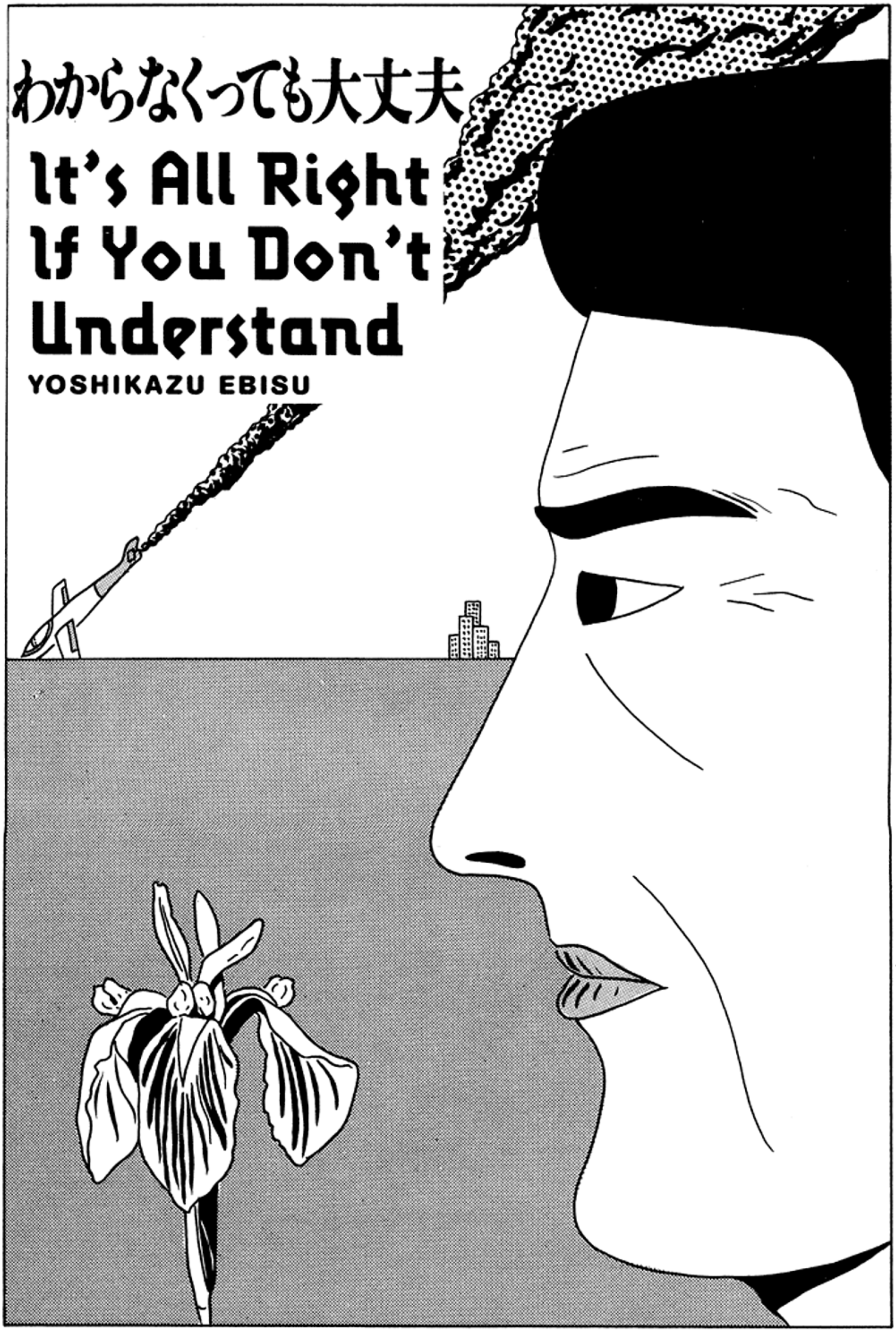

?
コツコツ
clomp clomp

END

わからなくっても大丈夫

It's All Right If You Don't Understand

YOSHIKAZU EBISU



Giddy up, giddy up.
Please, have some coffee.
Mmm, it's good. When it comes to coffee, instant is best.
Giddy up, giddy up.
How's it taste?
ba-boom
ba-boom

ppslap
ppslap

Man, I'm going to smack your ass.

Ouch, ouch.

Forgive me, sir.

Mr. Naka-mura!!

pah-slap
pah-slap

Giddy up, giddy up.

Mr. Naka-mura has no guts, so he needs to be toughened up.

Now, let's take it from the top.

Giddy up, giddy up.

That's how it's always been with him, and he never gets promoted.

ppslap

ba-boom

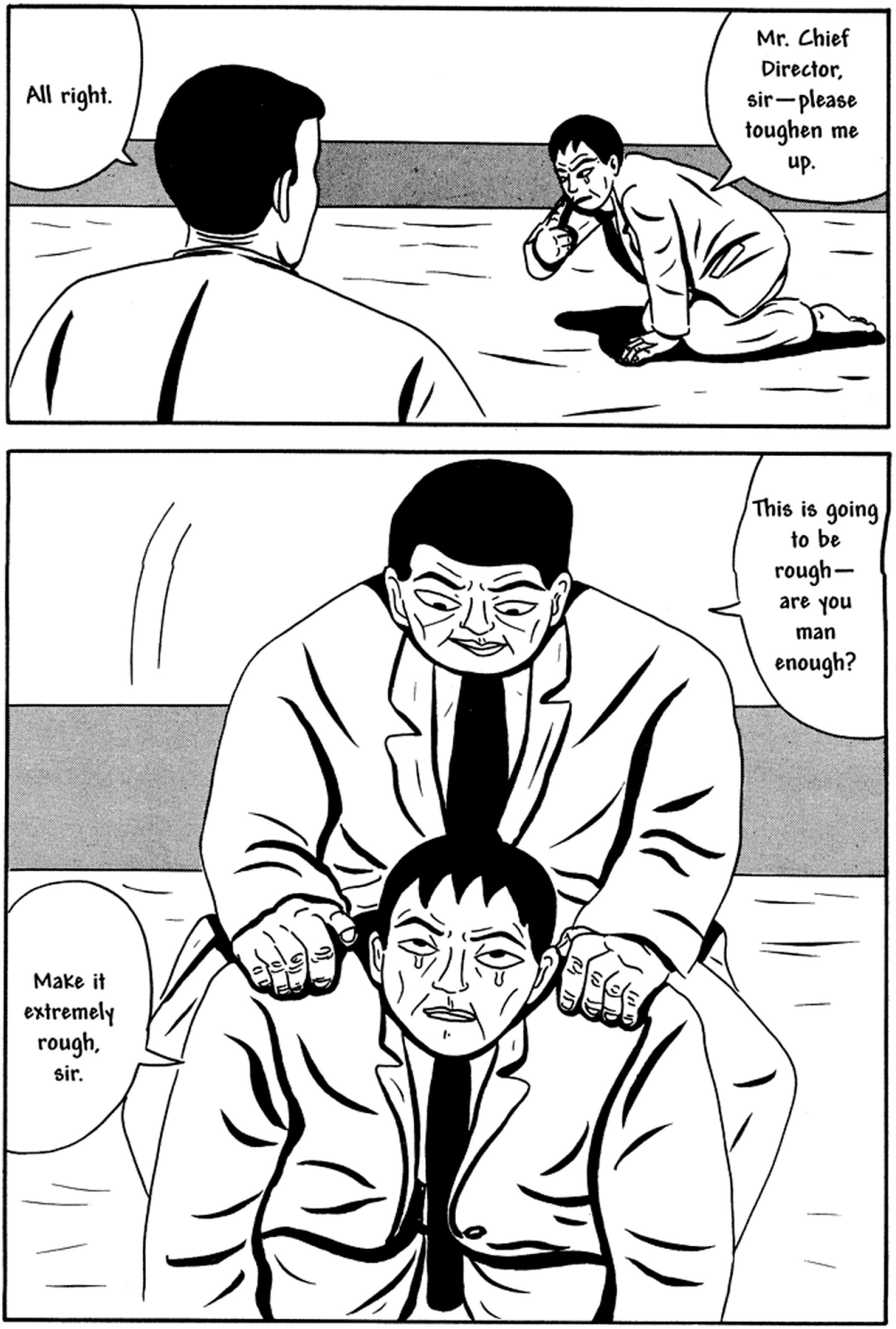
With losers like him, the backbone just turns to mush.

What's most important is guts and patience.

Yeah.

And now for some slaps on your ass.
Ouch, ouch.
ka-pinch
Now I'm going to pinch your cheek.
Ouch, ouch.
pa-thwack
pa-thwack
pa-thwack
pa-thwack
Ugh!! Look at this red ass!!
What a disgusting, lumpy thing.

Mmm, instant coffee is great.
Mr. Director, I can't breathe . . .
grrgly
ギュギュン
Giddy up, giddy up.
. . . . . .
Giddy up, giddy up.


All right.
Mr. Chief Director, sir—please toughen me up.
This is going to be rough—are you man enough?
Make it extremely rough, sir.

Giddy up, giddy up.

Giddy up, giddy up.

grrgly

Giddy up, giddy up.

Giddy up, giddy up.

gargly

Mr. Nakamura!

ba-boom

Hey, Boss!!
Boss!!

Oh my.

What a useless man.

Mr. Nakamura is dead.

What now?

No guts at all, just dead weight.

Grunt.

oofh

Grunt, grunt.

Well, I guess I'll throw him out this window.

poyeeeh

ドタッ

ba-boom

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Pigs aren't permitted to eat human flesh—you're all under arrest!!

What are you pigs doing?!!

oink

oink

oink

oink

oink

oink

Freeze, you pigs!

END

Steel Pipe Melancholia

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MASAKAZU TOMA

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Factory ruins, hazy in the morning fog.
A shadow trembling vacantly.

I can tell this silhouette is me . . . it's a strange feeling.

Oddly enough, the shadow is mine.

Did I come here looking for something? . . . I don't know. It's too early in the day to think clearly.

Why? Why am I standing here in this place?

Here and there a blast of steam escapes from a fissure in the pipes, giving off an acrid stench.

Steel pipes jut out from the ruins like clumsily stitched threads.

I can't shake the chilling notion that I'm standing among corpses with exposed intestines.

I'm going to get out of here, go find myself a beautiful green glade where sunlight shines through the treetops.

This is not a place I want to be.

I hear children nearby.

When I speak to Toyoko, she barely responds and looks off in the distance.

My daughter, Toyoko, is one of them. Her mother must have brought her here. She must be somewhere nearby too, off gossiping with her friends.

Apparently Toyoko is feeling especially sassy today.

"Where is your mother?" I ask her, and she points with her chin.

From the direction she pointed in, I hear the loud, coarse laughter of women.

My wife is scantily dressed in an unbelievably shameless outfit. Is this how she carries on when I'm not around?

Surrounding some guy who looks like a delivery man are my wife and four other housewives. They're just yacking away, having a merry old time.

One of the housewives is squatting down with her hand placed on a steel pipe. What the hell is she up to?

I try to ask her what she's doing in this nasty place so early in the morning but . . .

with all the happy chatter, I can't get a word in edgewise.

She tells me the pipe contains highly flammable methane. There was a piece of tape covering a hole in the pipe before, but then Mrs. Nakamura accidentally pressed one of her high heels through it.

My wife approaches me and implores me to please trade places with Mrs. Nakamura.

Mrs. Nakamura of course feels responsible, so she's been keeping her hand over the leak while they've been chatting. But now, my wife says, Mrs. Nakamura must leave for her part-time job.

Methane hydrocarbon gas is incredibly dangerous, she says.

Mrs. Nakamura and the others bow uncomfortably, then quickly leave.

I hate having to take over for her, but they assure me a man from the gas company will be here in ten minutes.

Darling, that gas is quite lethal. Please, no matter what, don't take your hand away from the hole.

Wha–?! My wife's got that delivery man by the groin!

But, mam, he's looking right at us.

Let's go, Jun— with the others gone, now's our chance.

I'm so shocked, I'm at a loss for words.

It's all right for this one time. I can't always wait around 'til the situation's just right.

She shoots me a dirty look.

Don't take your hand from that pipe.

Hey! What do you think you're doing?!!

Whoops —that's right.

The thought of my watching them gives him an enormous erection.

Mam, wait—not out in the open here, right in front of him— he's watching.

Y ... you ... you ...

I'm not sure whether my profound desire to kill them comes from jealousy or the fact that they have made a fool of me.

Alone, irritated, restless–and now my balls are starting to itch.

Blithely ignoring me, the loving couple walks off, cozily nestled in each other's arms.

Yes– the bitch!

I know that whimper.

From behind me, I hear a woman's lewd whimper.

while my wife, just a few yards away, enjoys herself like the devil– my god!

I'm stuck here with my hand on a pipe . . .

But . . .

When the gas man gets here I will be liberated. And then, so help me god, I'll see them dead.

I can't stop thinking about what they are doing.

I wait and I wait and still no gas man. All the while the whimpering continues nonstop.

In despair, I give up anguishing over things I can't do anything about.

My god– what kind of disgusting scene? What kind of lascivious thing–?

pssss

Why and for whom must I continue to do this?

The whole town explodes? Thousands dead?? And I, the criminal???

How long will I be left here plugging up this stupid hole? What if I just ran away–what could happen?

cough cough cough

What the hell is he doing?

A priest walks by, reading the Bible.

What happened to the gas company? And what about the police?

I don't know how long it's been. Now the whimpering has stopped.

A few stop and worship me with folded hands. Why worship me?

Looks like the town's safety is a lot more important to them than my own.

Hey, call the police!

The locals pass by and no matter what I say, they pretend they don't see me.

cough cough cough
cough cough cough

psss

I'm starved . . .

Yes–a cop!

No wonder, the sun is already setting.

Honey, as soon as I heard that you had replaced Mrs. Nakamura as the human patch, I went straight to the police.

"Human patch"?

A police officer arrives with a housewife and child.

This woman and child appear to be my family . . . ??
The woman, who may or may not be my wife, gives me something to eat, while the cop gives me a break from my duty.

I had no idea, sir, this sort of accident had occurred. The rescue squad will

be here soon. I'm afraid I can't stick around long, there are so many details concerning this incident which I must attend to.

Even if this meal was thrown together in a hurry, what does this tell the cop, everyone here, about our family's menu? Oh, this looks bad.

Instant noodles and a cup of rice–what a miserable meal for a guy who holds the lives and well-being of an entire town in his hands.

Are you finished eating? Please don't rush yourself. Are you still eating? Take your time, eat.

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gulp
shloop
shloop

Daddy—
slurp,
slurp!

The cop tells me he's going to the factory to try to get them to turn off the gas. Then he's got to go back to the station, and after that, he'll come back here.

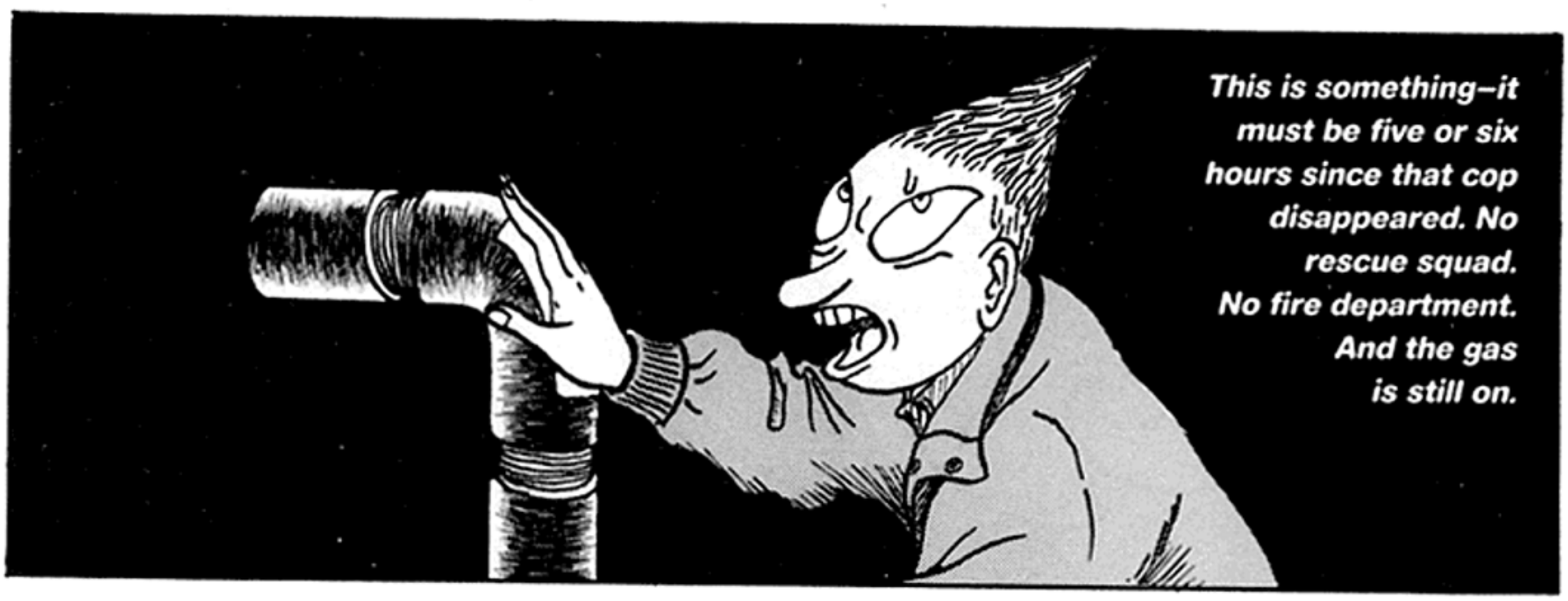
So I'm stuck here, and they can't miss their favorite tv show . . . How do you like that?

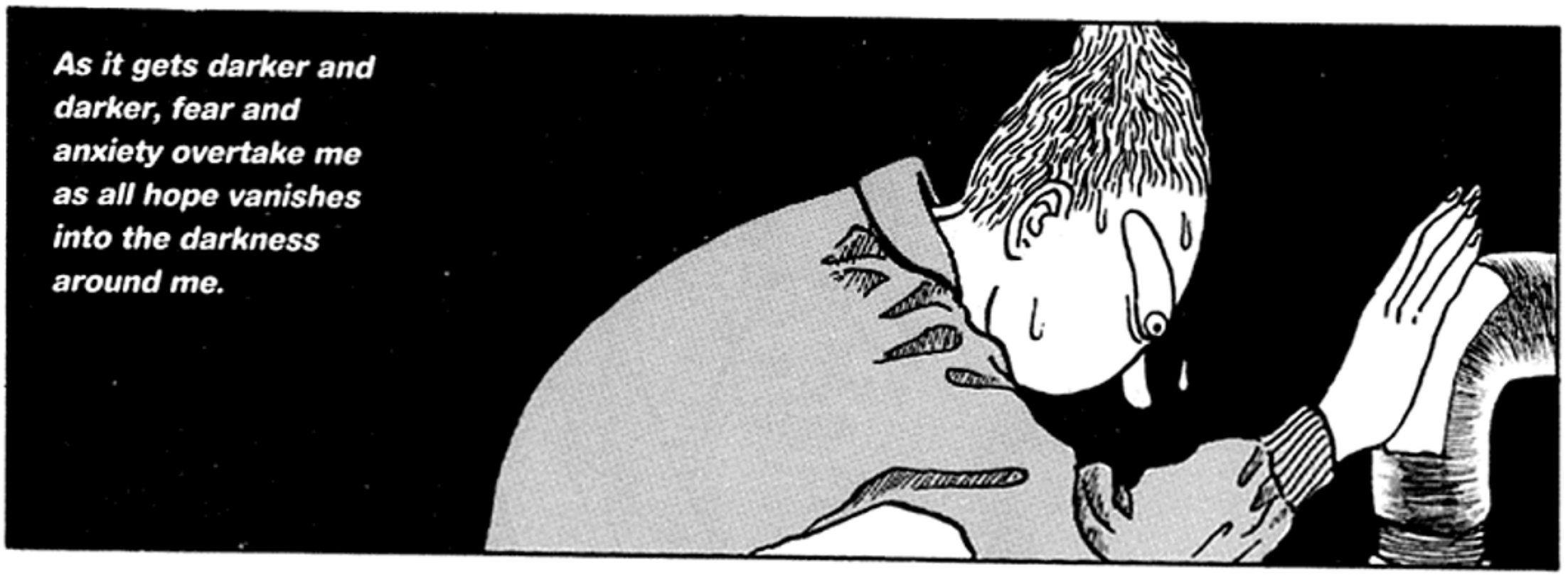
My wife and daughter leave for home. They say they don't want to miss their favorite tv show.

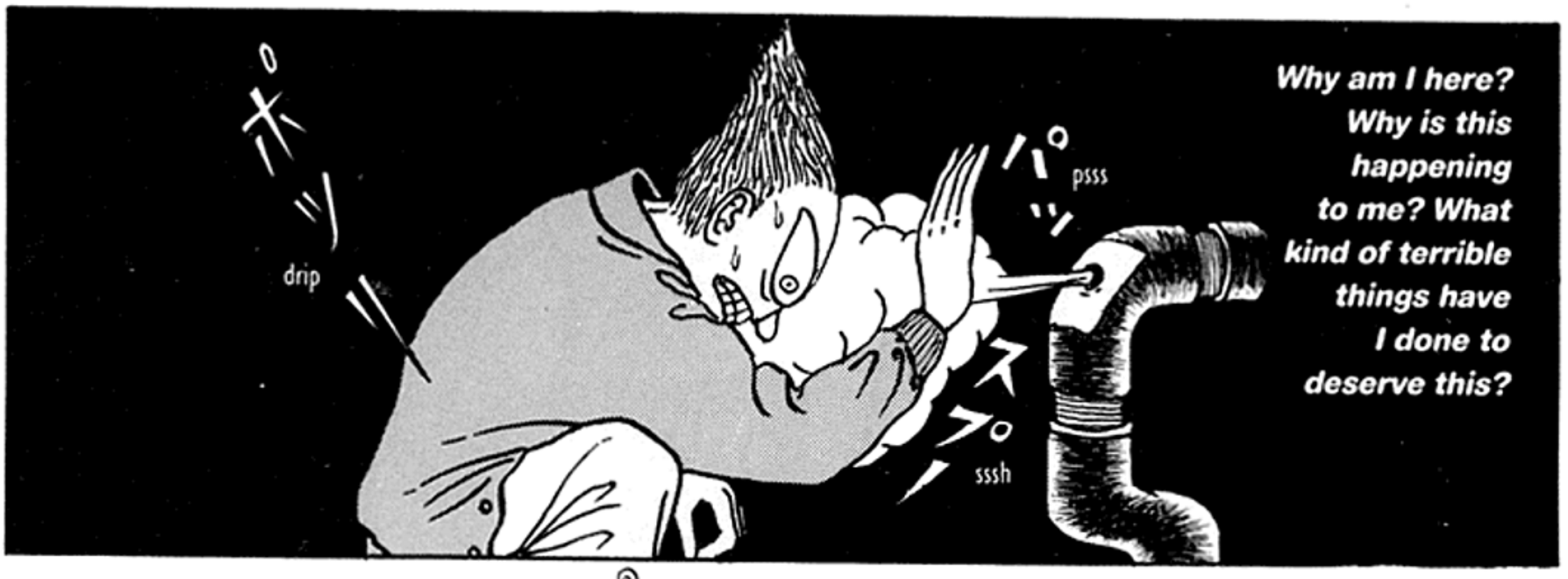
Cough, cough, cough

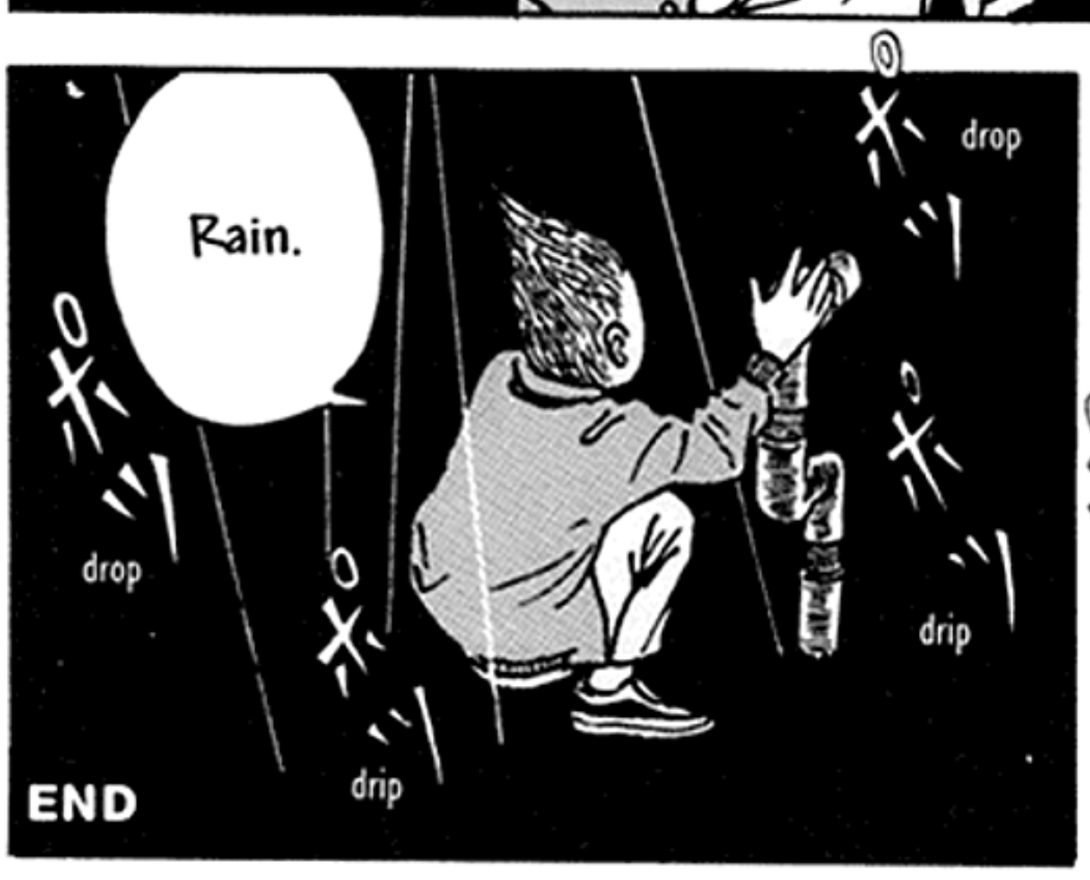
cough

psss


This is something–it must be five or six hours since that cop disappeared. No rescue squad. No fire department. And the gas is still on.


As it gets darker and darker, fear and anxiety overtake me as all hope vanishes into the darkness around me.


drip
psss
sssh
Why am I here? Why is this happening to me? What kind of terrible things have I done to deserve this?


Rain.
drop
drop
drip
drip
END

Uh—!
drip
drop

Future Sperm Brazil

TAKASHI NEMOTO

In this excerpt from a larger work, we follow the adventures of Sadakichi Suzuki, a young man living in a remote Japanese-inhabited area of Brazil where the townsfolk–demented one and all–believe that World War II is still being fought. Following a dream in which he is visited by the Emperor, Sadakichi decides it is time to join his countrymen in the final deciding battle of the war. (Ed.)

I'll give all I got.

IN CELEBRATION OF SADAKICHI SUZUKI'S SERVICE IN THE WAR EFFORT

祝出征鈴木定吉君

banzai

banzai

神社 護國

Mr. Sadakichi Suzuki ...

On this glorious morning, as you give your service to our great Emperor

Song to send off soldiers

a hundred million applaud your courage, their cheers ring up to the heavens, go our strong, brave son

Go get 'em!

BRAVE JAPANESE BOY!

I wonder, dear, can he really serve his country?

Hideki Tojo

東条首相

Yes, Your High-ness

I'm sure the Emperor will be impressed with his service—look how well he's done here in Brazil, so far from Japan—and he'll be rewarded with glory.

You're so right.

He's a good boy. I have no doubts about his ability to serve.

Don't worry. He's dreamed of becoming a soldier ever since he was a child.

Then we'll move there and start a big pineapple company.

heh heh

Oh, my.

I predict that after the war, our boy, Sada, will become governor of Hawaii Prefecture.

Aye aye, sir.

Work, work.

And the Yankees will be my slaves.

SUZUMOTO?

Now you are Suzu-moto.

Suzy.

Hmm ...

おめえの名前はなんつう？

WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

SUZY

Translator

But I won't just use them for labor.

toward learning respect for their Emperor.

Terry

These traditional Japanese names will be the slaves' first step

Now Terauchi.

Clapton.

Next!

Well, now your name is Krata-toshi. Next!

Clap what?

ザ

ザ

lap lap lap

blam

Yes, Sire!

Suzuki!

Ah, Japan lies across this ocean, and the decisive battle of the war is about to begin.

What !?

ザボ

splish

splash

Hey, Suzuki!

ザザザザザ

lap lap lap

I'll receive many medals, for sure.

ピ

boing

ピ

splash

ブル

ブル

tremble

Eh? Uhh . . .

You shouldn't take all the glory for yourself.

Hey, we want to go to Japan and serve the Emperor, too— take us with you.

Su-zuki, are you sure we can swim all the way to Japan?

Ca-ca-can't stand it . . .

With our spirit, the Pacific Ocean is a mere pool!!

splash

splash

splash

Gulp

Kimura!

Can't—

We must hurry. Our country is facing its greatest crisis ever. There's no time to waste.

Fool! This isn't just a swim, it's a battle! We can't let our casualties hold us back!

Wait up—we must search for Kimura.

Eh, ah, ooh . . .

splash

splash

Exhausted

パシャーン slap

Huh?

What's this?

blub blub

splash

Lucky this pot's here. I can use it to bail out water.

Never mind.

Just take a rest.

What the hell is this doing out here?

Look— it's a bicycle cart.

blub blub

Patrol boat

BRAZIL

Onde Vai o Senhor ?

B? R? What's the next letter—I can't read these foreign characters.

Shit, I can't become a POW so soon—the humiliation!

Ship!

Eh!?

Human torpedo?

What we need is a human torpedo.

Venha Para Cá

Shit.

But our cart doesn't stand a chance against their battleship.

Eh?

kkrack

!!!!!!

?!

blam

AZIL

Quem é o Senhor?

unngh

C'mon, quick.

All right.

Shinkishi, you shall die for your country and become a glorified spirit.

What?

Eeyah!

ドゴ

sssock

Ugh!

I—
I—can't
breathe.

ka-blam

BRAZIL

He can't breathe—look at his legs kick!

fssss

Look at him go!

fssss

CHARGE!

Go!

I can't breathe—I'm dying—ha, ha!

Nossa!

BRAZIL

Nossa Senhora

fssss

ギラ
ギラ
ギラ
ギラ
gleam

blam

BANZAI!!

BANZAI!

Your first duty as soldier . . .

pant pant

splash

is loyalty to the Emperor.

kkrack

Eh?

You unpatriotic cur— repeat after me.

pant

splash

Th-the b-b-brave one . . .

The brave one must be prepared.

Say it.

First— as a soldier

What's that?

I can't go on any longer.

S-s-sa-da-kichi

pant

pant

splash

splash

splash

F-first as a . . .

Coward! Maggot! Where is your Japanese spirit?

It's been five—no, six—days, I've been swimming without food or water—I can't . . .

AHHHHHH—

Dog!

slam

Once we've saved our beautiful Japanese islands, we can then achieve our dream of creating the greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

Japan is facing its most dire national crisis. We must come to the Emperor's aid as soon as possible and rid our nation of the beasts that would overtake us!

And the Emperor will reward our great work with a glorious commission.

banzai!

Then we will return to our village on a ship filled with treasures.

crack

Oh no! A storm's brewing!

ザバ

splash

ザブ

splash

Ah!

splash

wham

stumble

oof

splash

kssh

gaaahboom

Storm at sea!

AIEEEE!

splash

rrrrummble

ゴゴゴ

Ugh!

Huh?!

Uhn ...

doo-doot ta doo

My god, what time...?

〜ねがのく泣て寝たま〜ね だ想夢の一げんた〜兵一新一
Go to bed, O pitiful soldier,
Go to bed and cry once more
Unsure whether it's dawn or dusk, in keeping with the fine soldier he is,
Sadakichi instinctively does his duty and blows loud his trumpet.
プカ
プカ
プカ
プカ
blub blub blub
blub

Get up, you miserable excuse for a soldier!

slam

Huh, wha—?

doo-doot ta doo

ギラ

A week goes by.

ギラ gleam ギラ ギラ

First a soo ...

First, a soldier must keep his faith.

First, a soldier should be courteous.

ギラ ギラ ギラ gleam

First, a soldier should live a simple life.

Hey, hey— Repeat—

プヵ プヵ blub

MGGH PHGHH Gghphh

Why aren't you repeating?

slam

Take that!

Hey . . .

. . . . . .

smack

Hee hee hee

Hey, speak up! Where's your military loyalty, you blockhead.

slam slam

I'll flog that cowardly spirit out of you!

yank

Hee hee hee

Heh, heh

Going insane when we're suffering a national crisis?!? You call yourself a soldier?

chomp

OW!

huff

Listen carefully—all we are going through ...

People like you—losing your minds over every little thing—are a disgrace to Japan.

huff

huff

huff

giggle

Hee hee

slam

is a test from the Emperor to determine if we are worthy to participate in his holy war.

whao

Ouch!

slam

Hee hee

stumble

huff

Oops

You understand?

stumble

splash

ker-splash

The Emperor watches us from heaven.

Hee hee

fffoop

As I was saying ...

Ah, I got it– I'll make something to fish with.

But meanwhile I'm starving. I guess this is it.

gleam

Tee hee

pant pant

arrgh

Now I can catch a huge tuna—and you can eat all you need.

Hee hee

Need bait...

Hee hee hee

gleam

It's for your country.

keyrrkk

Ha ha

ギラ gleam

ハアハア pant pant

コロコロ

Bwaha, hee, hee ha!!

Hee, hee hee— yah—

ギラ gleam

ハアハア pant

ギラ gleam

nibble

ギラ gleam

splash

ドゥ
thud

Yes, you have endured the unendurable and borne the unbearable— at long last you have passed my test.

wha?

Suzuki!

Ah, oooh, heh . . . heh, my Lord.

I know you have suffered much, but now it is over.

Look— you have caught a tuna.

Ah.

blub blub

As you may have surmised, I have been putting you through all these trials.

Em-Emperor, thank you so much.

And when you have gathered your energy you must rush to the mother country and fight the good fight with me.

My Emperor.

ka-splash

It's huge!

This is your tuna— eat your fill, build your strength.

Ah, I knew the Emperor was watching us from heaven.

I must return, now, to the war, but I shall send a great battleship for you.

Ha, ha Emperor— the honor is all mine.

Huh?

You see, Matsu-kuchi.

When I get back home I'll see that he's court-martialed.

Who cares.

He must have escaped.

Where did he go— the son of a bitch.

I must eat to regain my strength so I can give my all for Japan.

keyrrkk

But now I must eat this tuna— my reward from the Emperor.

Musn't skip the fatty parts.

Ah—delicious!

モグ nyum

モグ nyum

Down the hatch.

What's that?

REPUBLIC OF JAPAN

Ah, I've filled my belly, and now I'm so sleepy.

ahhh

zzzzz

Somebody's drifting.

Yeah, but there's something weird.

END
60

A Love Like Lemons

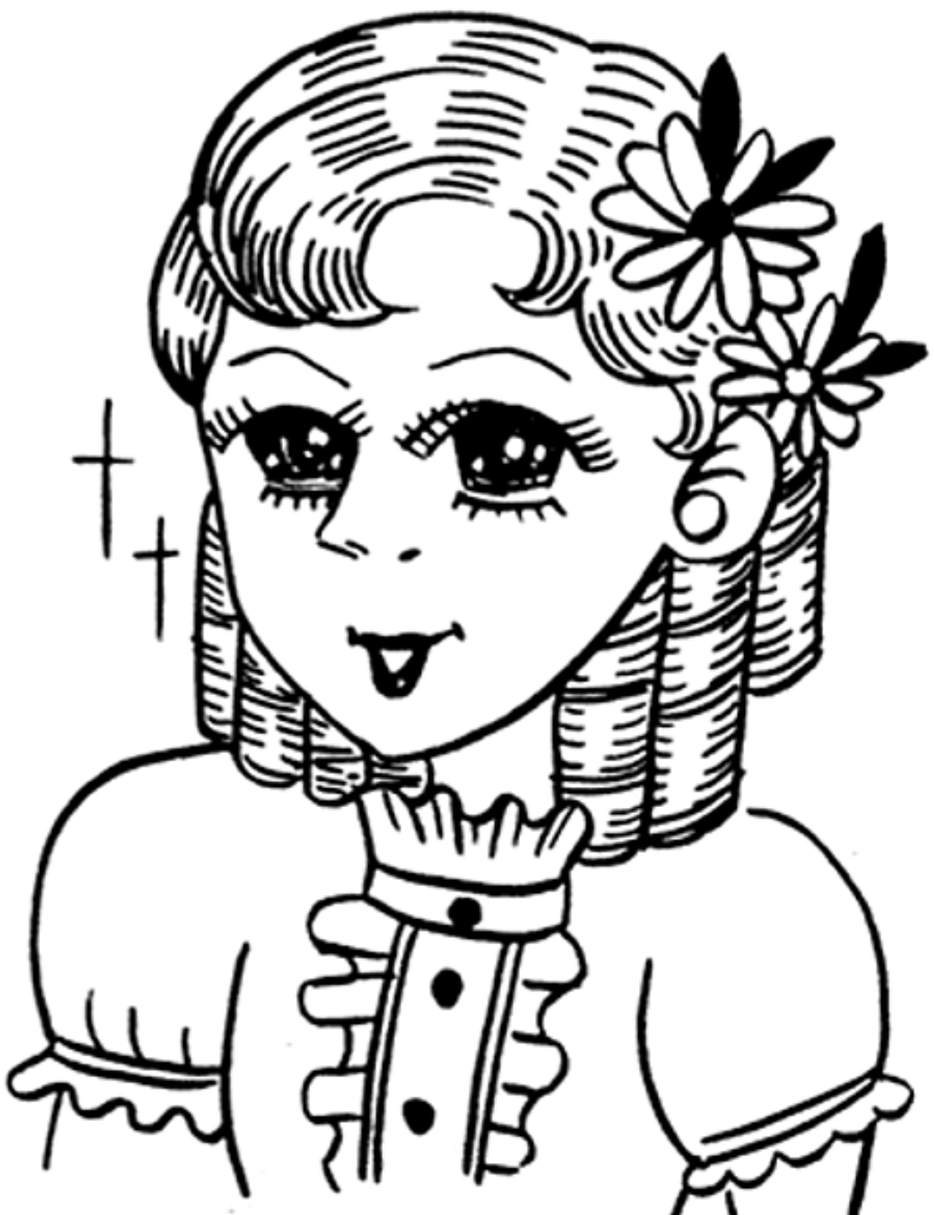
CAROL SHIMODA

PLAYERS

Fuyuko Tachibana. Her dark past is her weapon on love's battlefield.

George Morita. A real cool guy, and popular too. His mom is Japanese, his dad's American.

Milky Yamada. She's so fashionable, so chic!



Mariko Yamate. Quite a snob—but pretty.

He's all mine!

The handsome George Morita is the most popular boy in his class.

He's so cool!

カッコイイ！

ステキ！

Dreamy!

ha ha ha

I could make him so happy.

Oh, that's pitiful.

I'm sickly, my family's poor— I haven't any friends or money.

shock

But I'm not falling for it.

How tedious! You're such a square.

But I have so much more to tell you.

wip

Nice body!!

George, I love you,
I love you!

lick
lick

ahhh

Our hero, Morita, you see, is already involved
with Mariko Yamate.

My name is
Milky. Nice to
meet you all.

Next
morning
a newly
transferred
student arrives.

She looks so happy–the bitch!

The fashionable and elegant Milky becomes the star of the class.

What a cutie-pie!

he he he

What a babe!

Wow!

But we've only just begun!

It's all over with us now, we're through— so long!

But, but—

You parasite!!

smack

But what about our child?!!

sob sob

I must follow my heart!!

And so, our hero, Morita, has cast off the shackles of his past and begins life anew.

I ♥ MICKY

Nice body . . .

END

Selfish Carol's Summer Vacation

CAROL SHIMODA

わがままロルの夏休み

Hi! Hot enough for ya?

Where shall I go today?

Haven't we met?

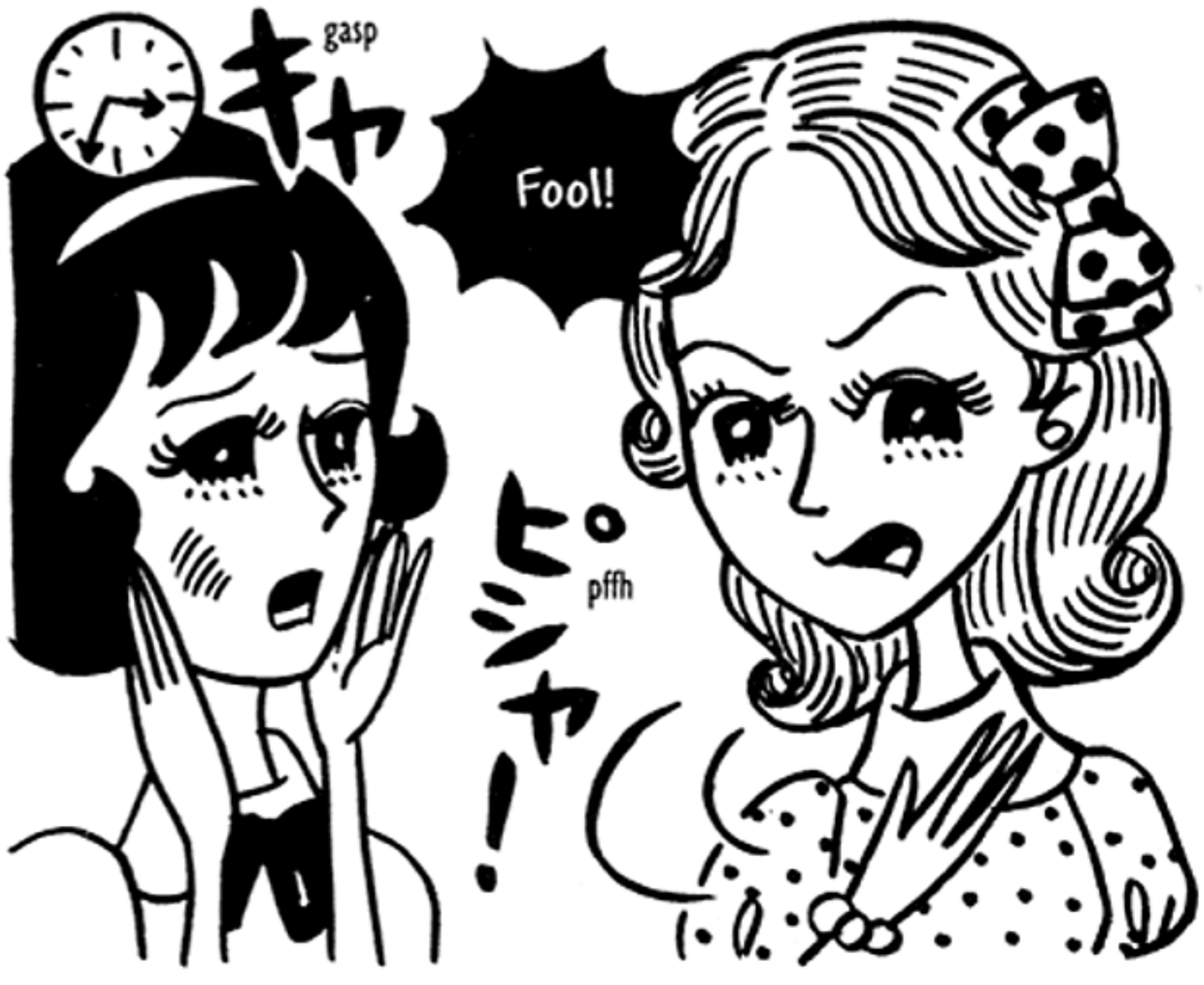
Love needs no words.

See you later!

Ahhh, feelin' good!

Leave me alone.
What's wrong, honey?

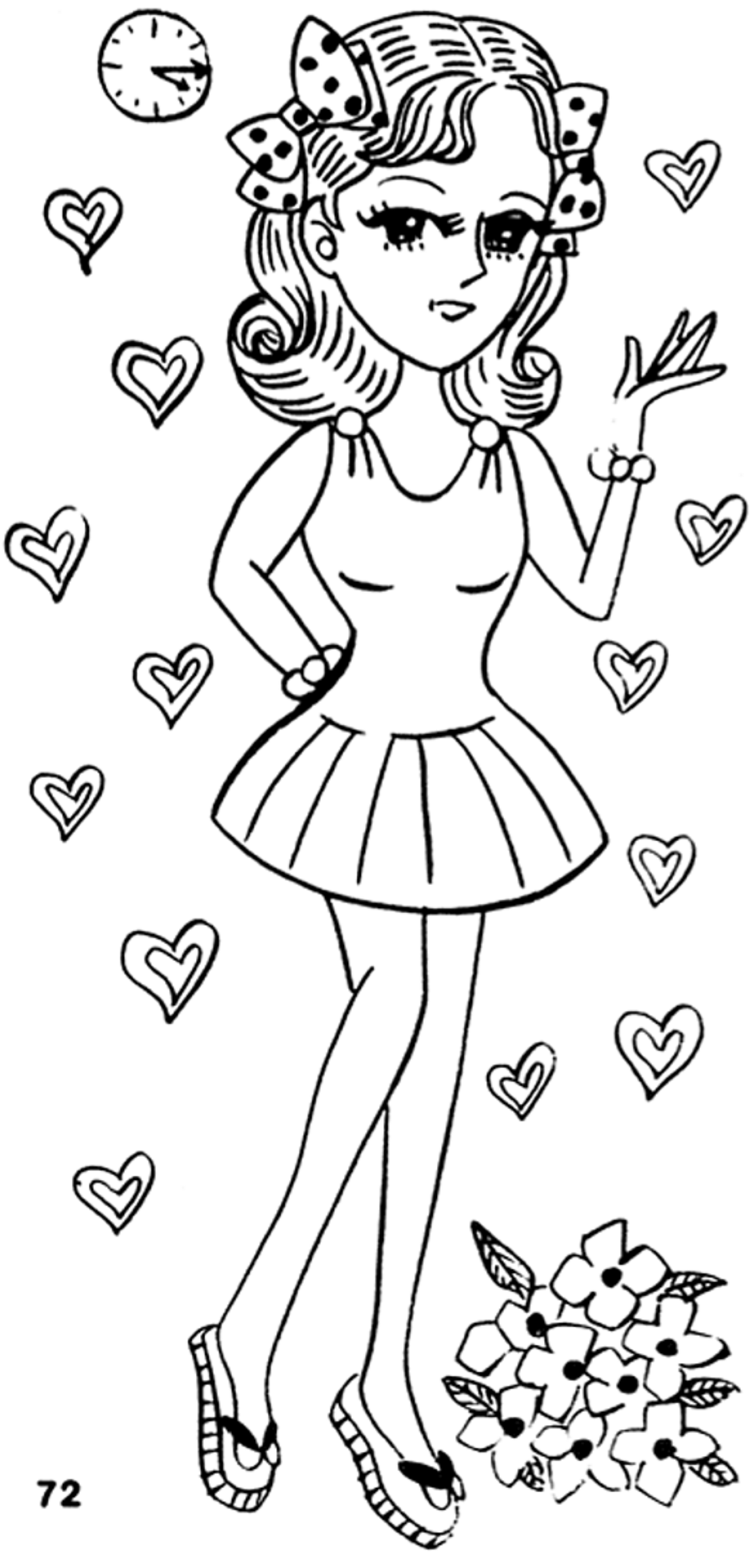
If you must know, I've got B.O.!


gasp
キャ
Fool!
ヒソヒソ
pffh
!

It's true, you really do stink!

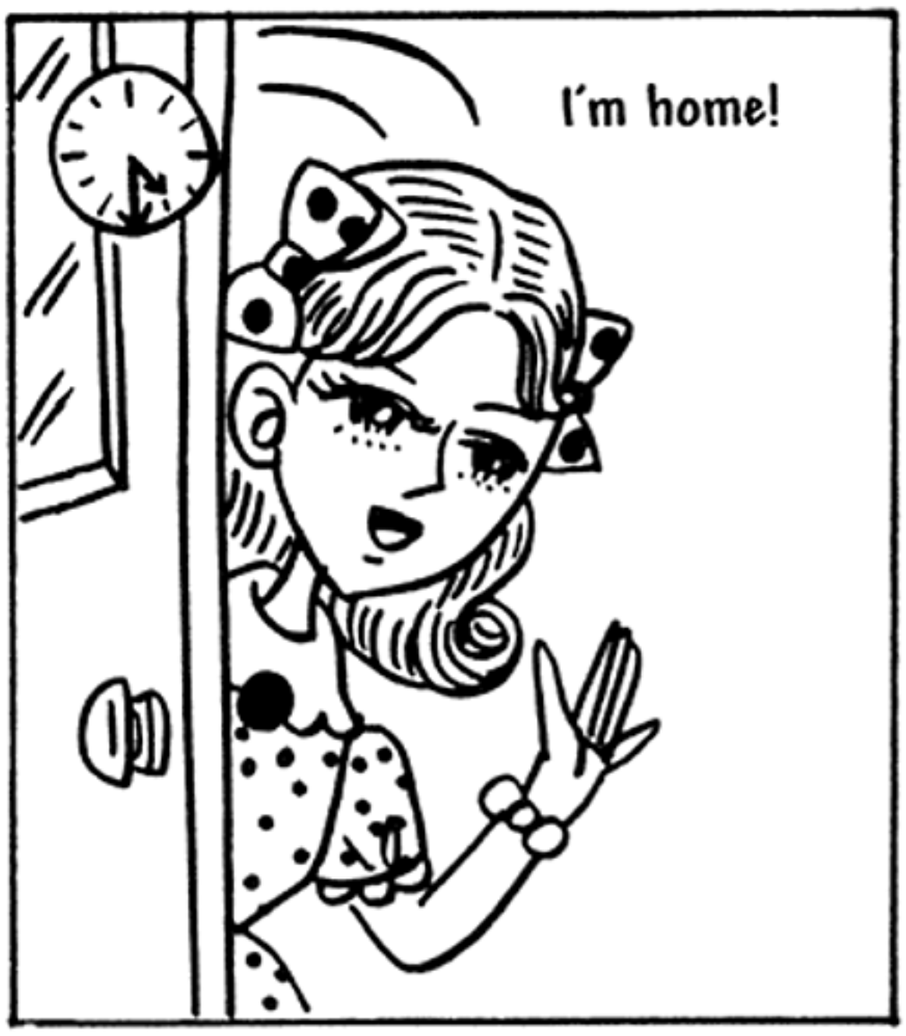
gsh

slash



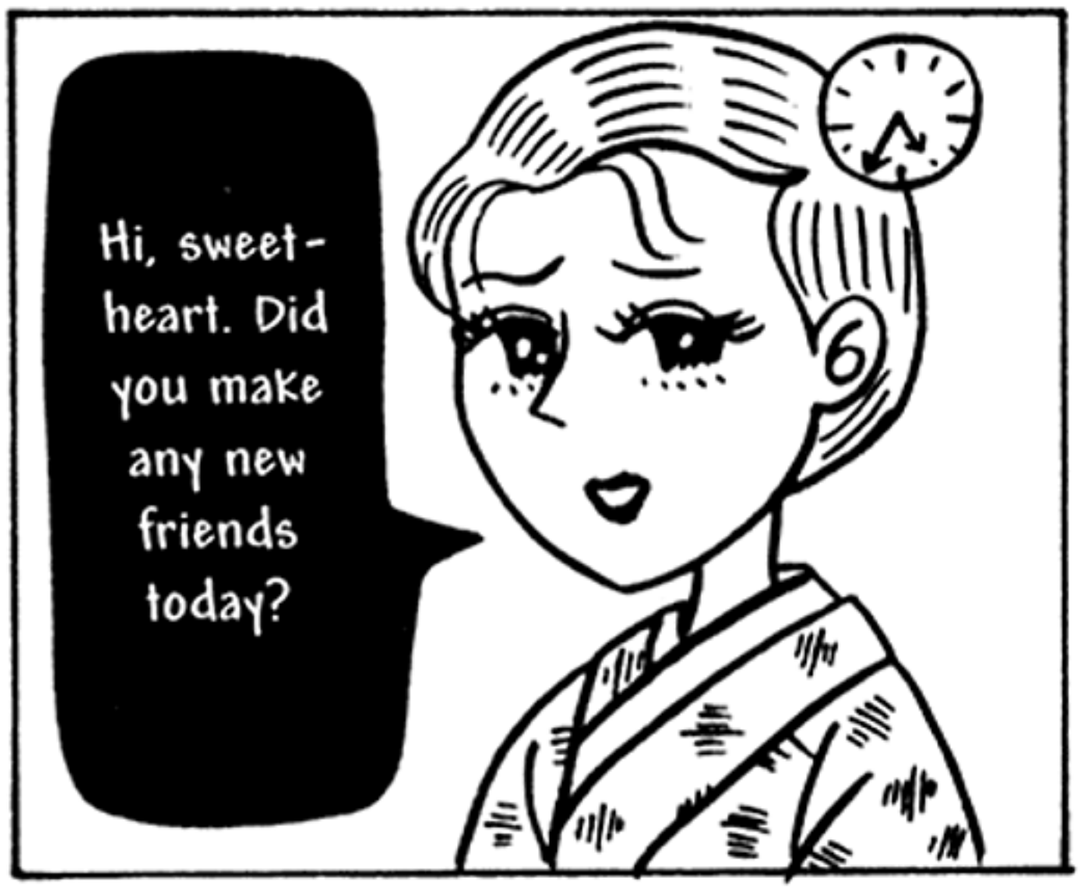
Uh-oh, there's blood everywhere!

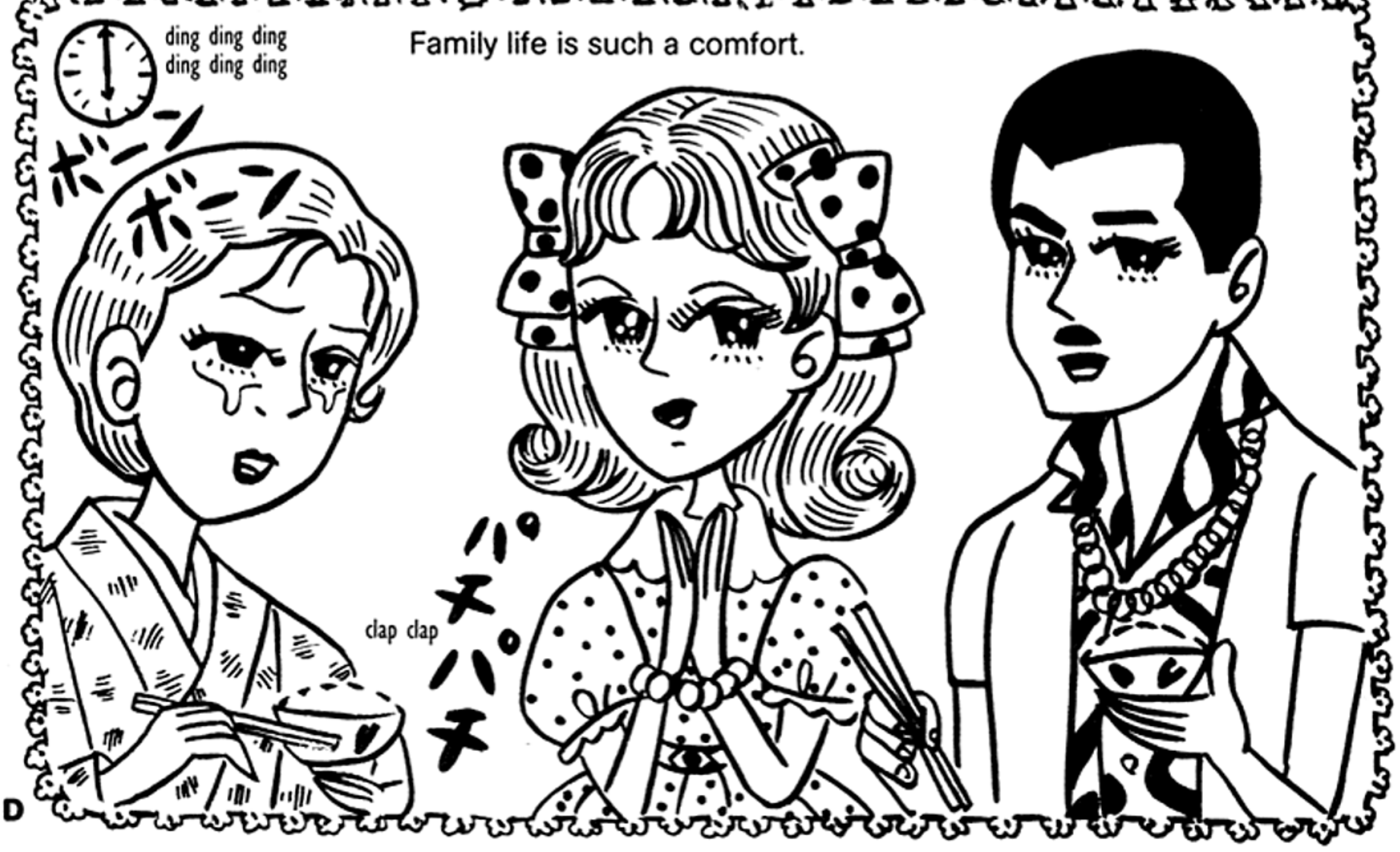
Better freshen up. I'll go for a quick swim.


I'm home!

All done peeing. Guess I'll go home.

No, everybody just teased me again today.

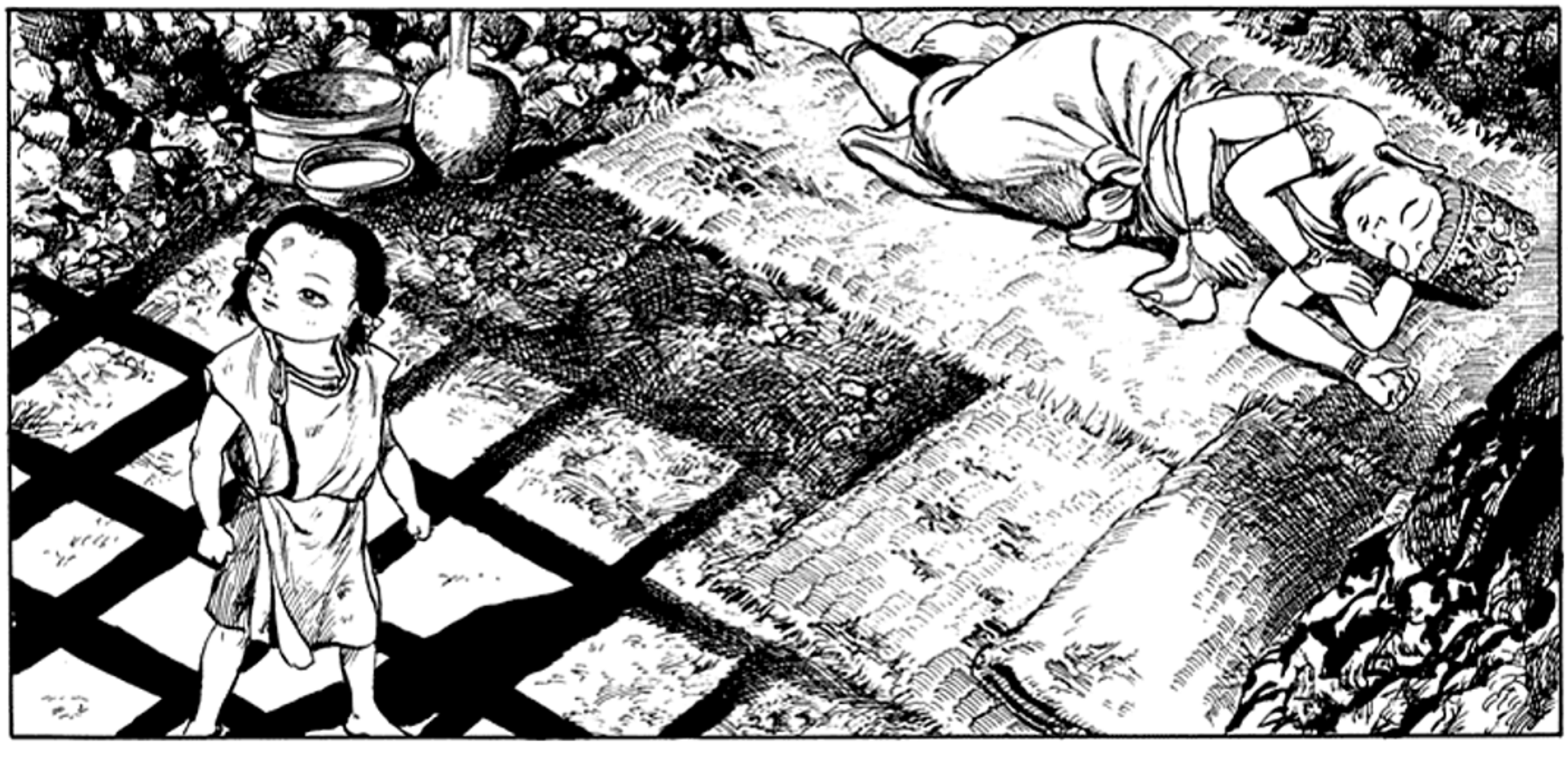

Hi, sweet-heart. Did you make any new friends today?

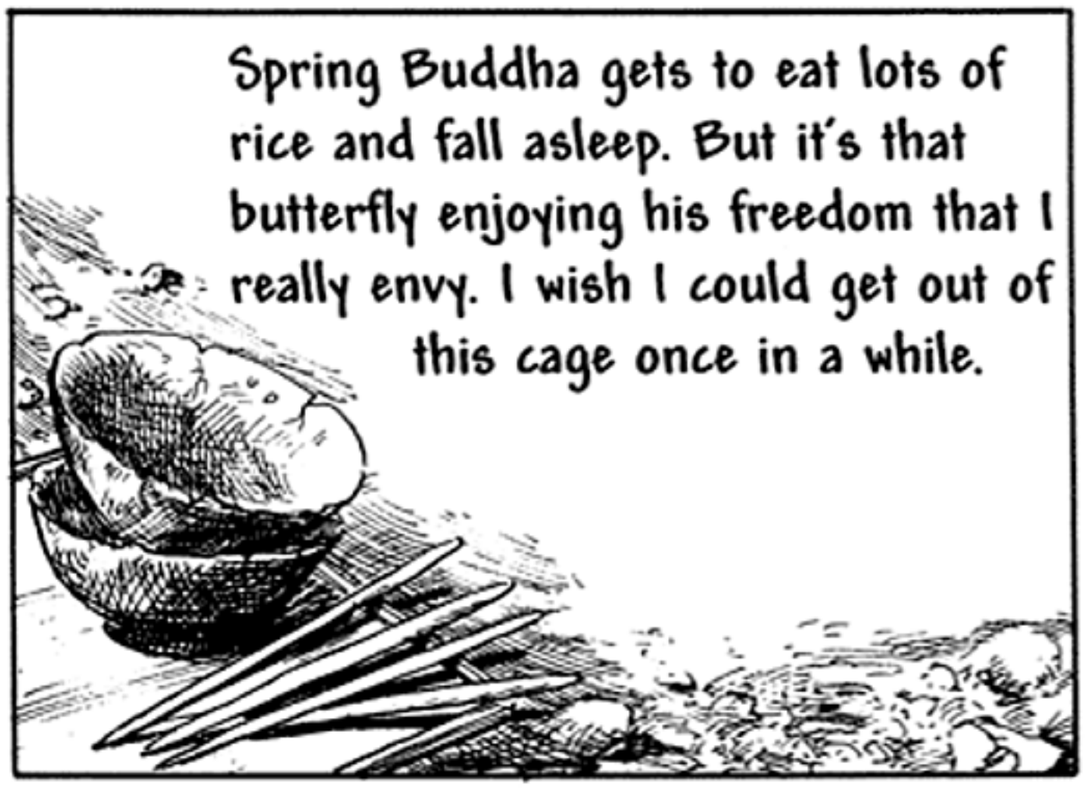

ding ding ding
ding ding ding
Family life is such a comfort.
ボーン
clap clap
パチパチ
END

Mercy Flesh (Jiniku)

KAZUICHI HANAWA

flutter
flutter




Spring Buddha gets to eat lots of rice and fall asleep. But it's that butterfly enjoying his freedom that I really envy. I wish I could get out of this cage once in a while.

Let me scratch you.

Yes, yes, your back is itchy.

ummh

Occasionally a flea leaps off.

Spring Buddha has awfully thick hair.

rustle

slam

バーン

He's called "Spring" Buddha because he was captured when the mountain cherry blossoms were at their peak.

Have to eat fast before Buddha takes mine too.

gulp

myumm myumm

gulp

gulp
gulp

shit!

myumm
myumm

yeow

yank

Yes sir! Poops? Very good sir!

Boy, I really want to get out, but I know I'll be stuck here 'til the day I die.

plop

gsssh ゴゴゴ

gsssh ガサ

Since I never see anything but this one scene, I can detect even the slightest growth of vines. Ah, it's summer outside.

ひよん

wheee

ひよん

故知般若多羅三藐三菩提

故得阿耨多羅三藐三菩提

wheee

ひよん

Here comes my master.

He's captured another Buddha.

Master, please let me out of here.

creak

shuffle shuffle

Please, master –look at me. Tell me I'll be allowed out.

Shit! They're leaving.

gulp gulp

Heh, heh, heh. This latest catch is a summer Buddha. Our master must be very happy now that he's got two Buddhas.

Heh, heh, heh—what an appetite—eat up!

But if the Buddha is not alive, he can't do anyone any good.

Once I went to the city and saw monks at a big temple praying to a Buddha made of wood.

Eating rice and shitting— these Buddhas are alive.

Ah . . . cicadas are singing. Summer must be at its height.

Live Buddhas— our good luck.

The vines are growing fast.

grrssh

Everyone must be out fishing or playing in the river.

The two Buddhas are always fighting.

scratch scratch scratch

shuffle

I'm sure even the Buddhas want to go outside.

But with these sutras written here, there can be no escape.

sniff sniff

Ow! Ooh! Eee! Ahh!

yank

Last night I saw my master come and lick the Buddha, grasping him very tight. That must be how he got those scratches.

Ow! Ohh!

There are scratches on his back.

Come, pilgrim, come and see for yourself.

I have traveled far and wide through this country, but this is the first I've heard of Buddhas who eat rice.

Speak of the devil– here comes my master.

So now what do you say? Our master struggled valiantly to capture them.

Hmm, I see.

I tell you to shit–give us a shit, please, one shit.

...But what, I wonder, is this incredible stench?!

Well, they certainly look like Buddhas.

prod prod

Shit! Show us your shit– come on and shit.

Their perspiration is trapped and pools between strands of hair.

As the beasts get older, moss grows over their hides.

It's said they can transform themselves into any shape ...

This gives them a faint glow at twilight.

My dear pilgrim, if you doubt everything you encounter in the world, you become narrow-minded.

gahboom

plink plink

craaack

ka-sheen

zah zah zah

Looks like Buddhas are afraid of lightning.

craaack

squeal squeal

squeak

チ…チ…チ…

chirp

stomp
stomp
stomp

ZZZZ

Now I remember hearing all that noise in the middle of the night.

The Buddhas are gone!

Huh?

Thanks to them, we have a little meat for a change.

gulp gulp

Heh, heh, heh. Our master wasted all that food on those fakes.

Well, it's a good thing we found them out when we did.

They're trying once more to capture Buddha.

They're taking logs up the mountain.

ひょん

wheee

ひょん

Tee hee hee

Tee hee

It takes more than food to capture a live Buddha—we need a pitiful creature—an object for Buddha's mercy—as bait.

tee-hee tee-hee

Oooh, it tickles!

And so we have our "jiniku."

After covering the body with sutras, we tie it up and then set a heavy rock on it overnight.

Hee hee!

This is really strange. My vision is getting dimmer and dimmer. I can't see anything at all. I can't hear anything either. I feel like I'm losing my mind.

"Jiniku" . . . What is "jiniku"? Am I going to become something called "jiniku"?

donk

jab

See, we place jiniku in that cage as bait— this draws the true Buddha very fast.

ping

The light of the world is Buddha—the consciousness of the entire universe.

Look there—the light of all the world converges and creates a glow.

Ah, Buddha is too strong for our trap.

Oh!

Could it be that this pilgrim is the real Buddha?

Let's find out.

He must have planned the whole thing so that kid could escape.

crumble

crack

wack

Oh well, my mistake.

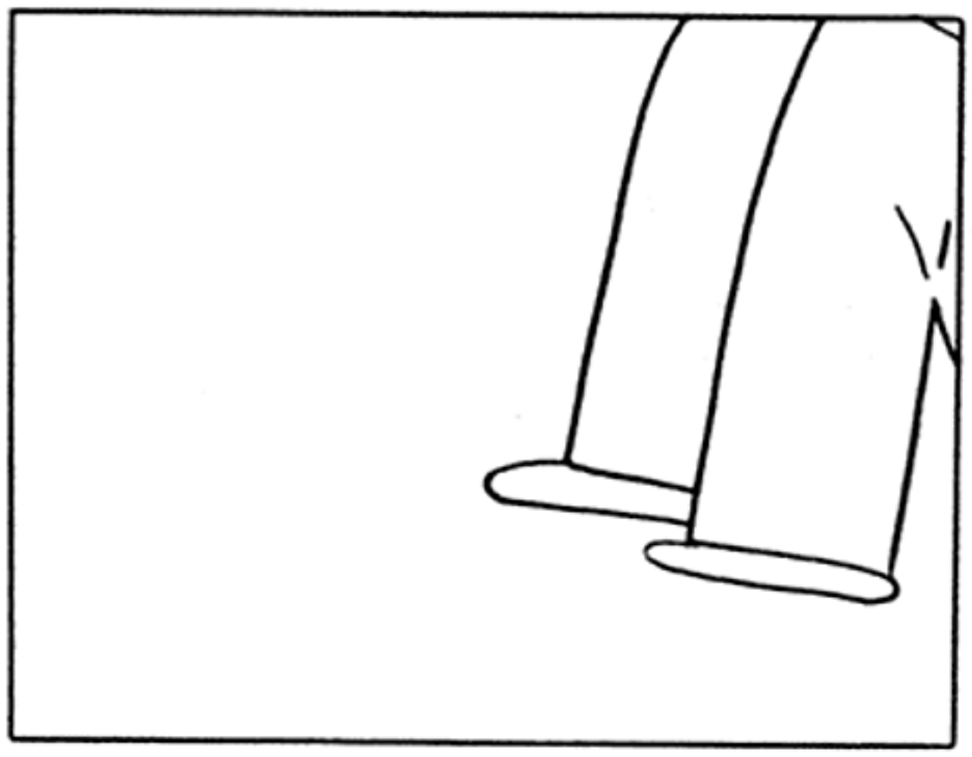
Whaa?

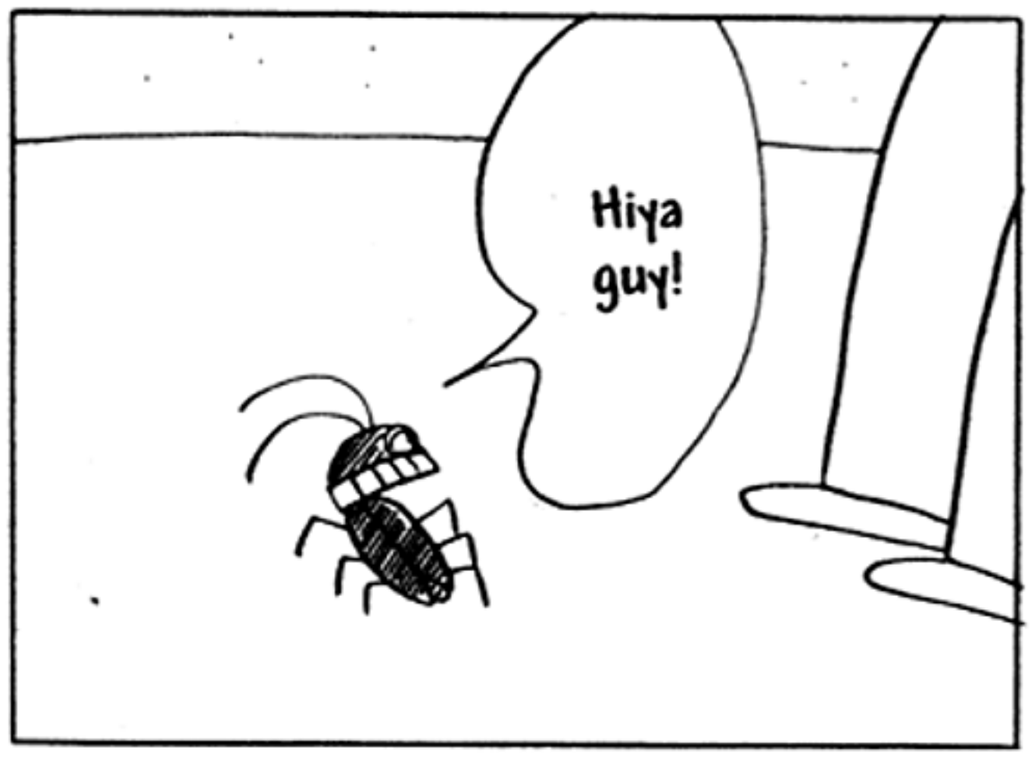
END

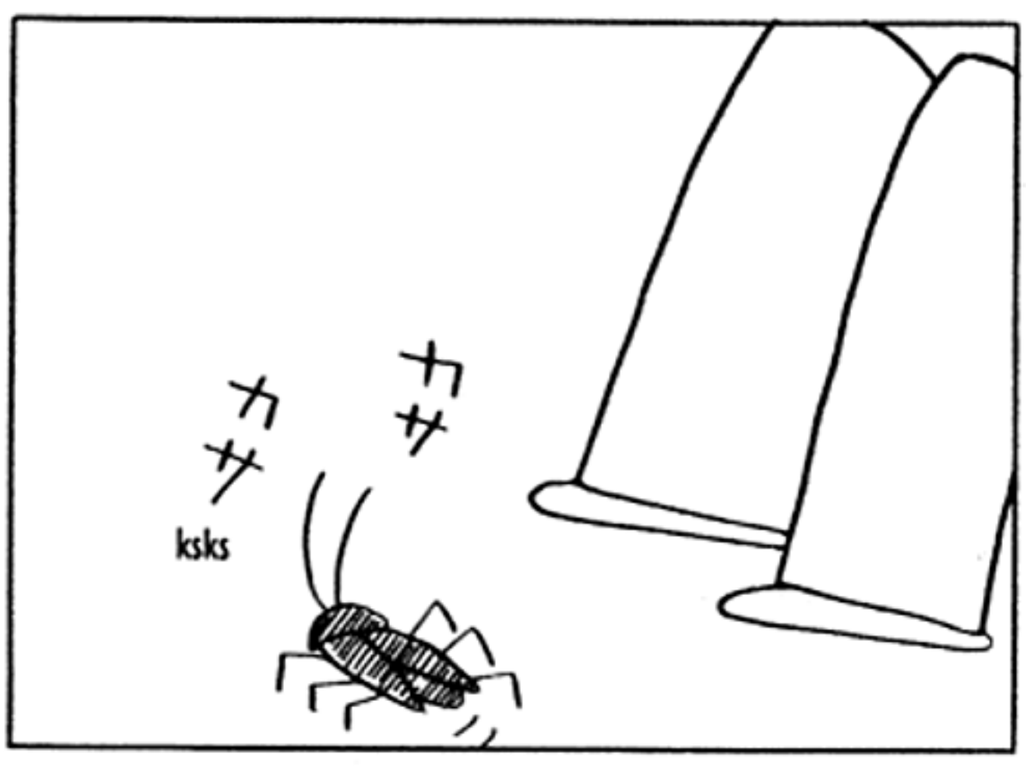
Don Quixote #1

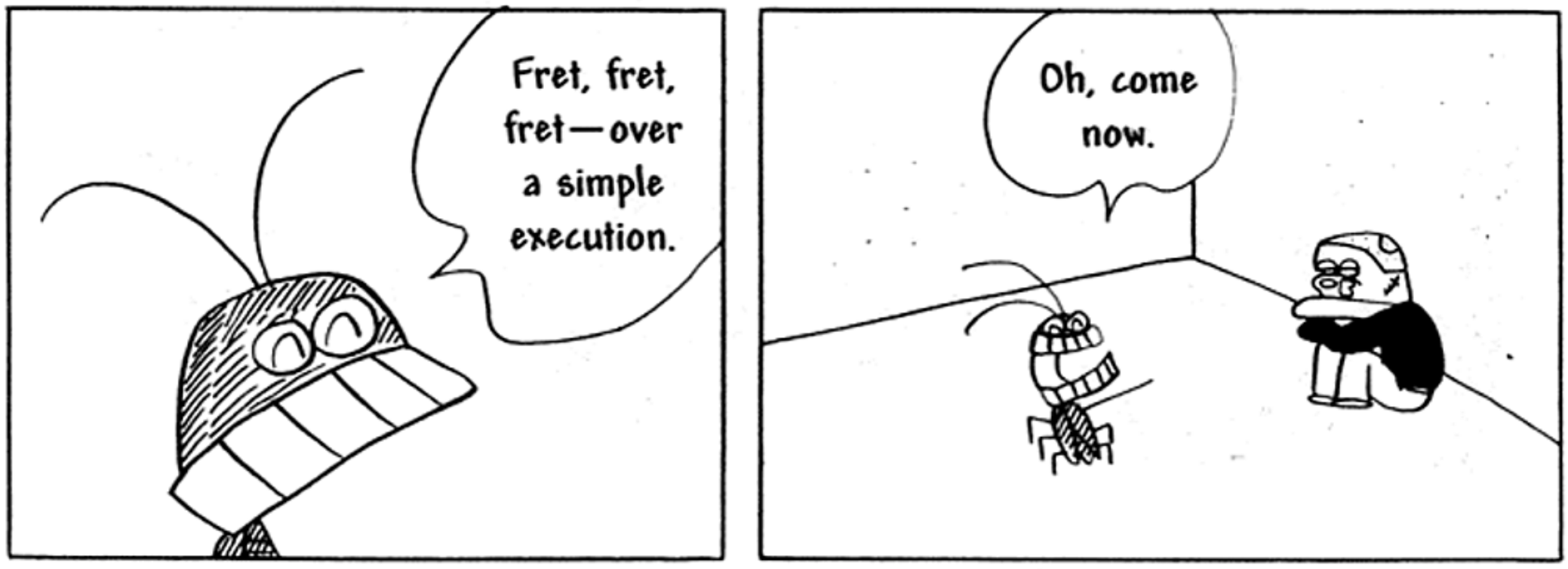
YASUJI TANIOKA

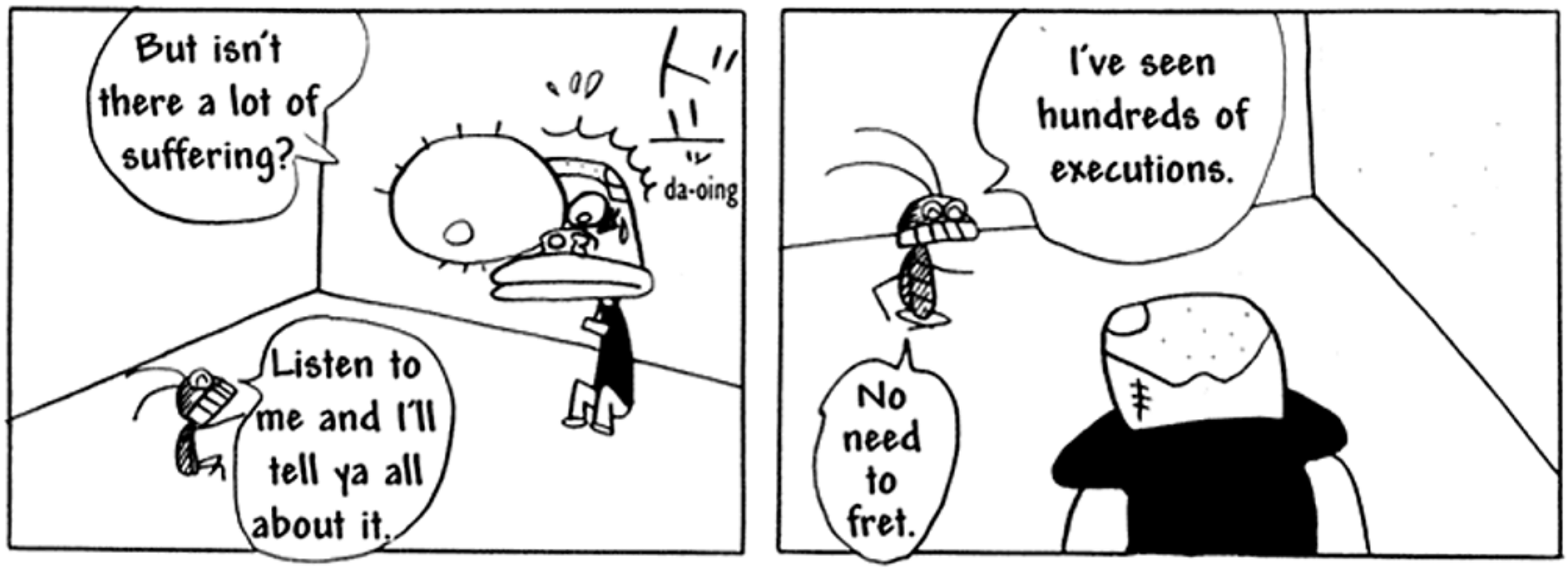
タスジのドン・キホーテ

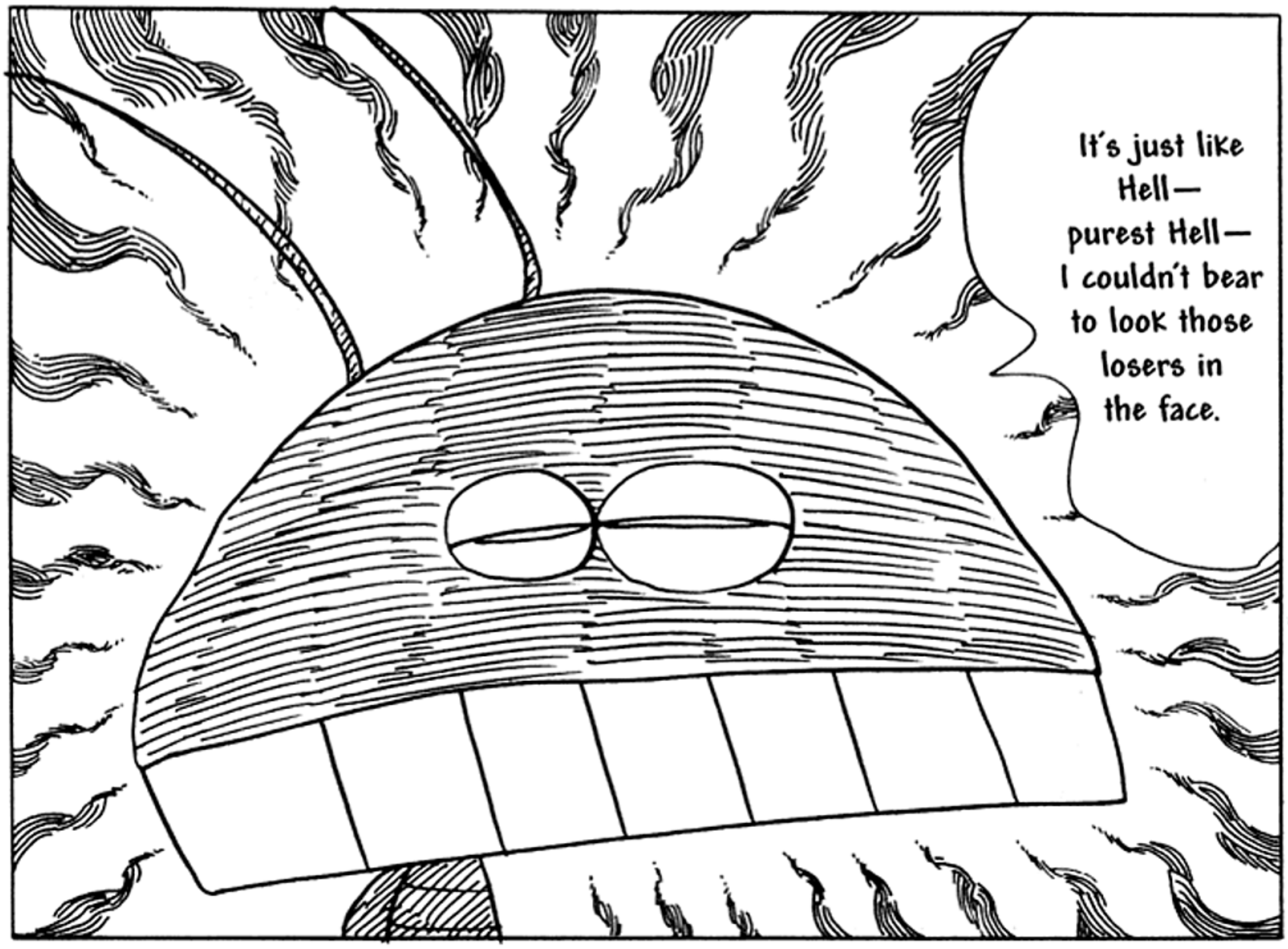


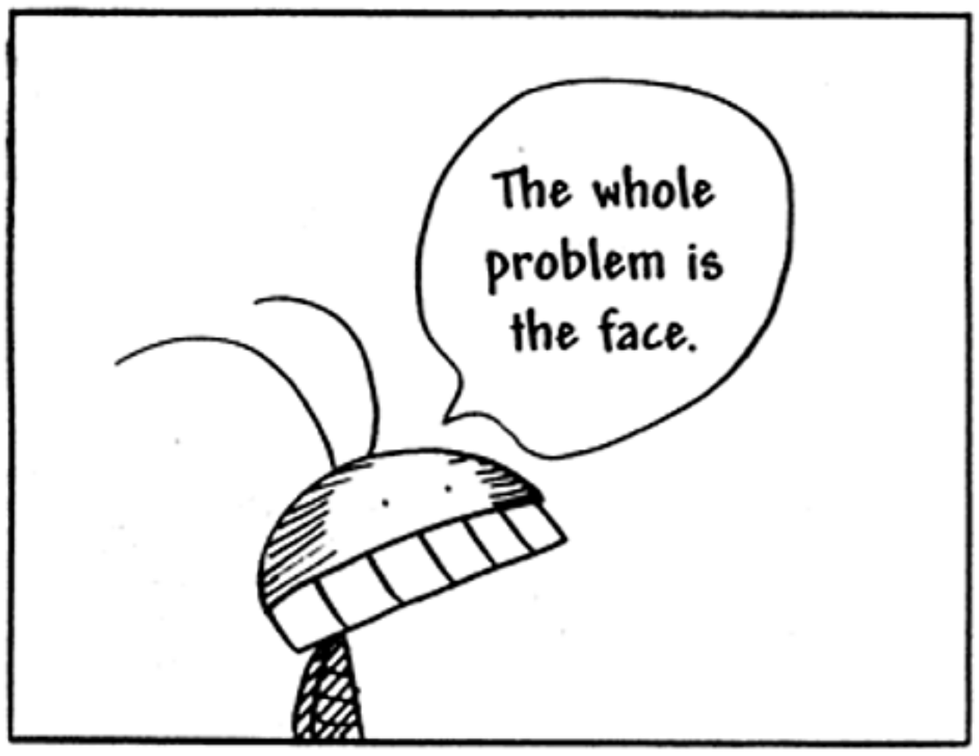


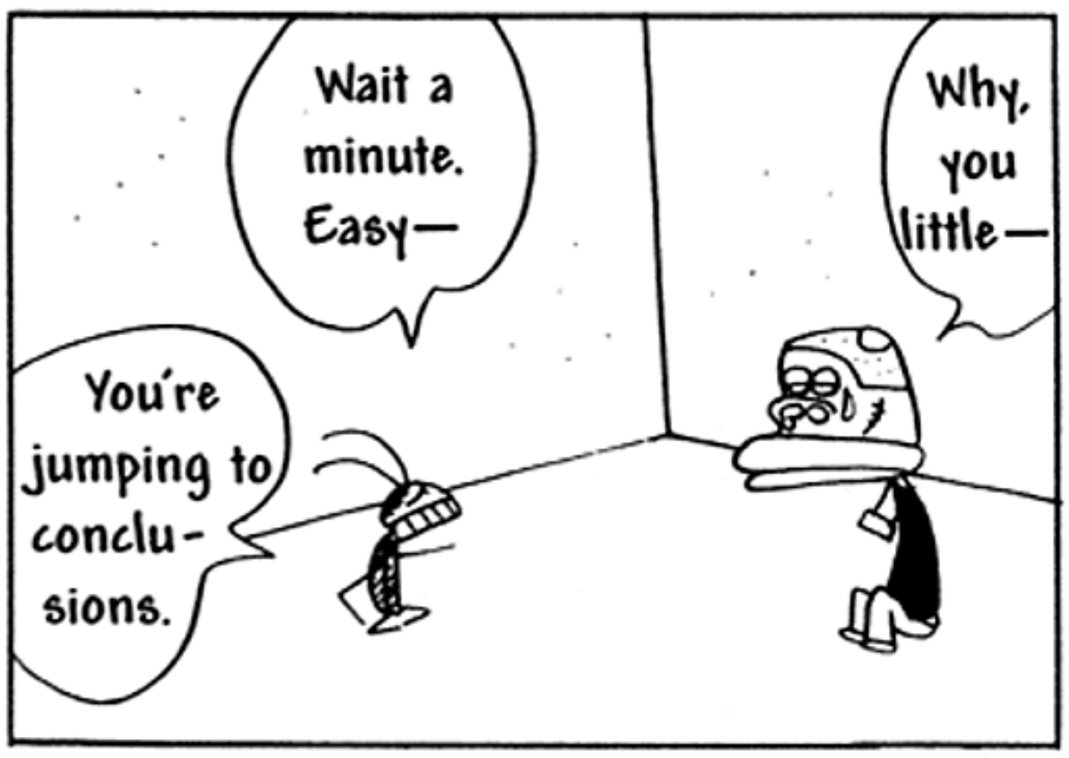



Fret, fret, fret—over a simple execution.
Oh, come now.

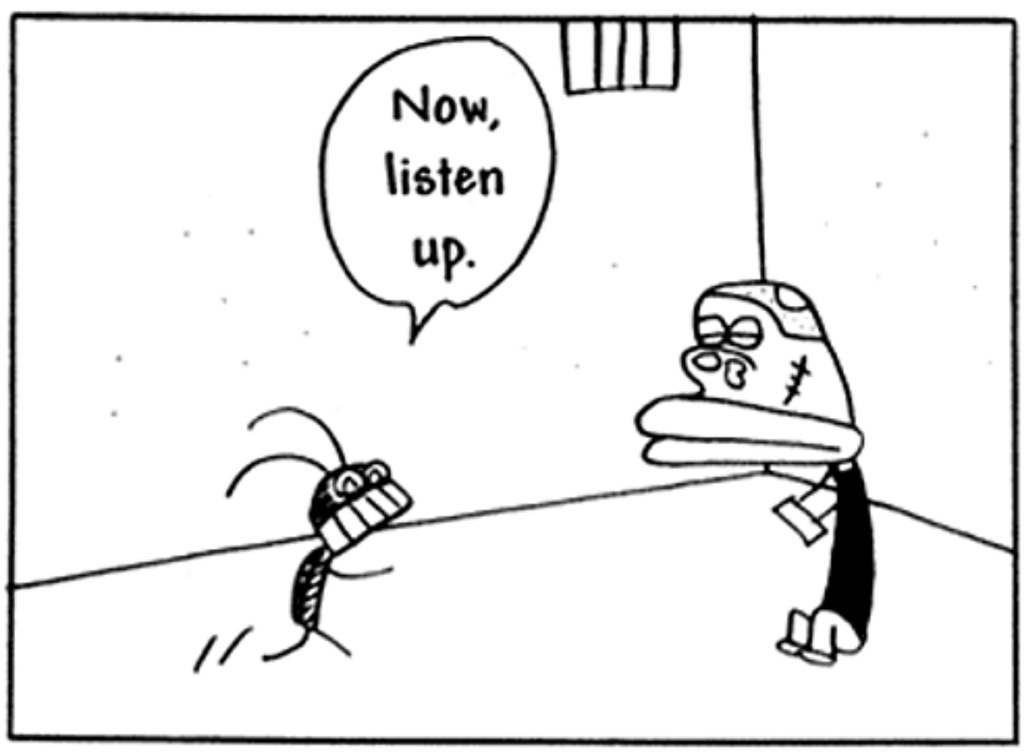

But isn't there a lot of suffering?
da-oing
Listen to me and I'll tell ya all about it.
I've seen hundreds of executions.
No need to fret.

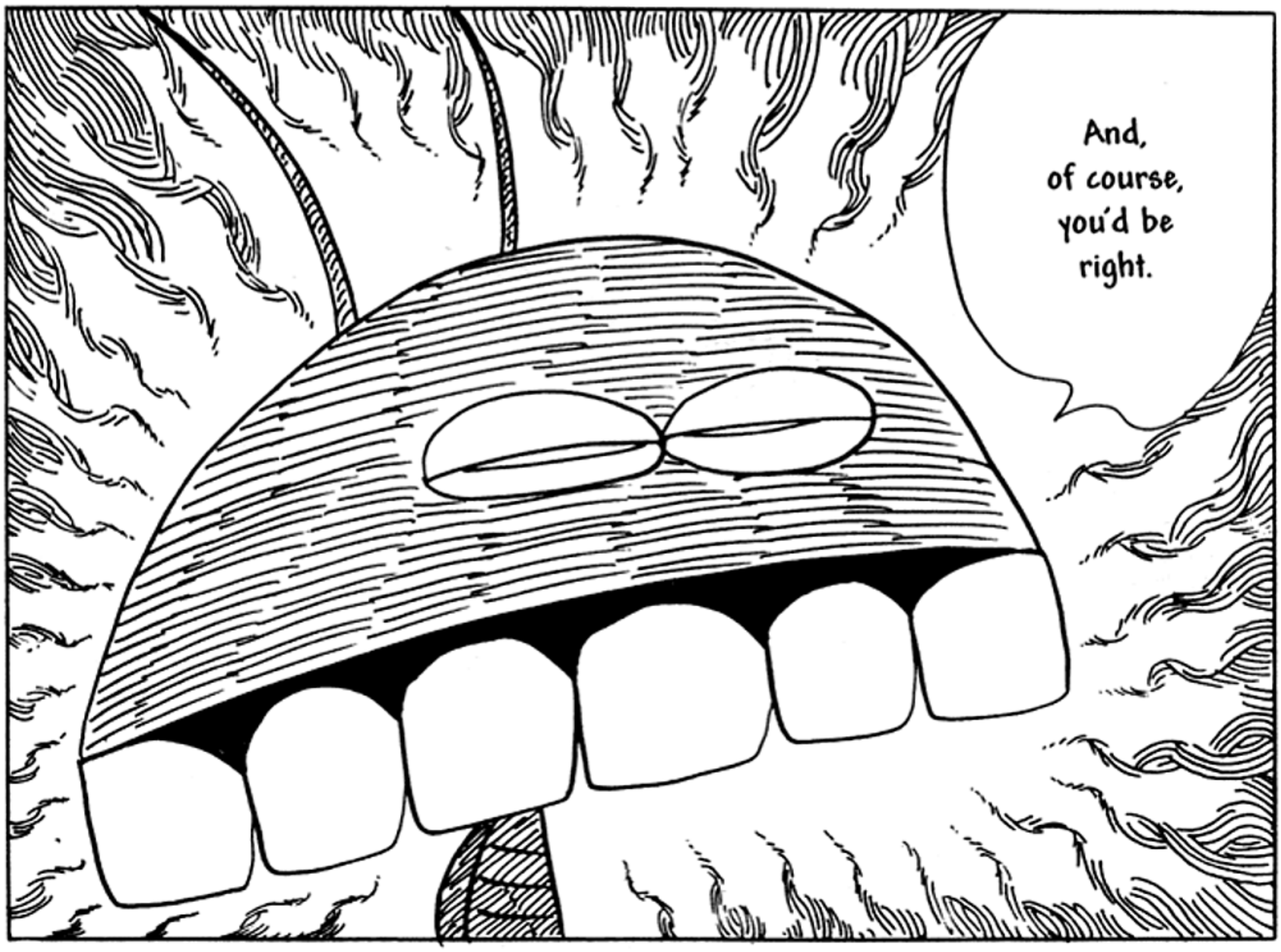

It's just like Hell— purest Hell— I couldn't bear to look those losers in the face.

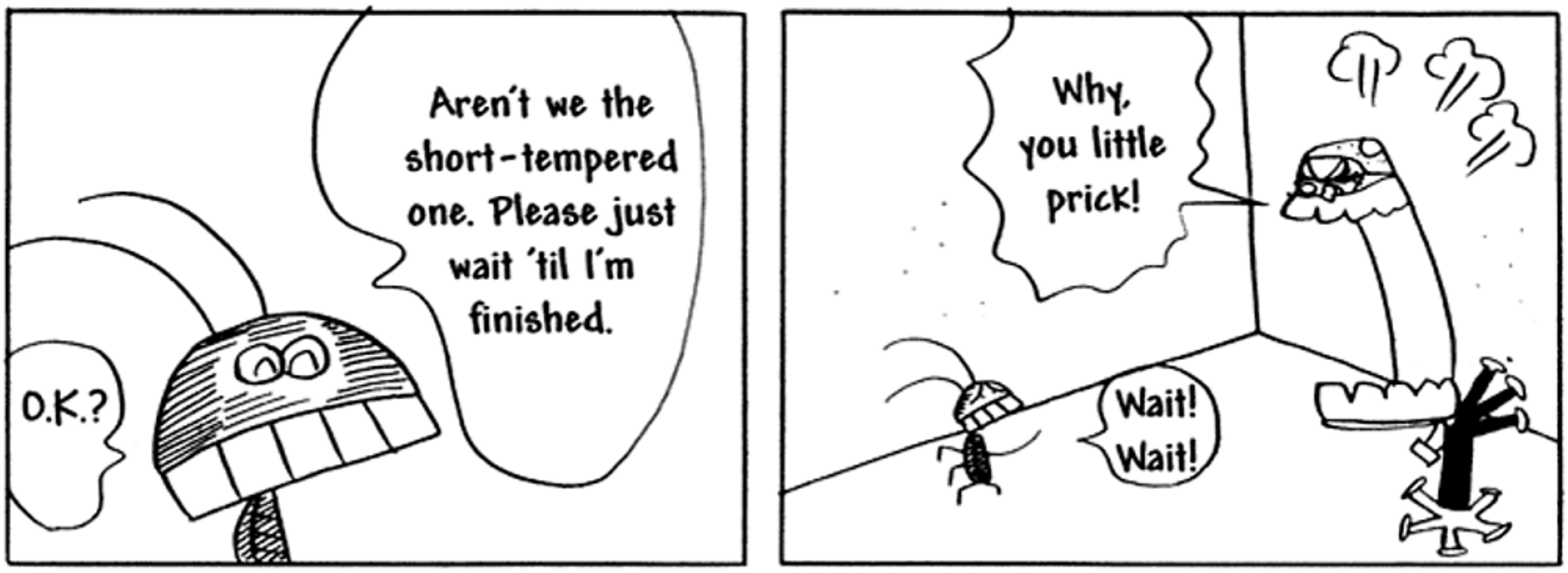

The whole problem is the face.


Wait a minute. Easy—
You're jumping to conclu-sions.
Why, you little—

Maybe you're thinking that after such incredible suffering the face must look truly hideous.


Now, listen up.

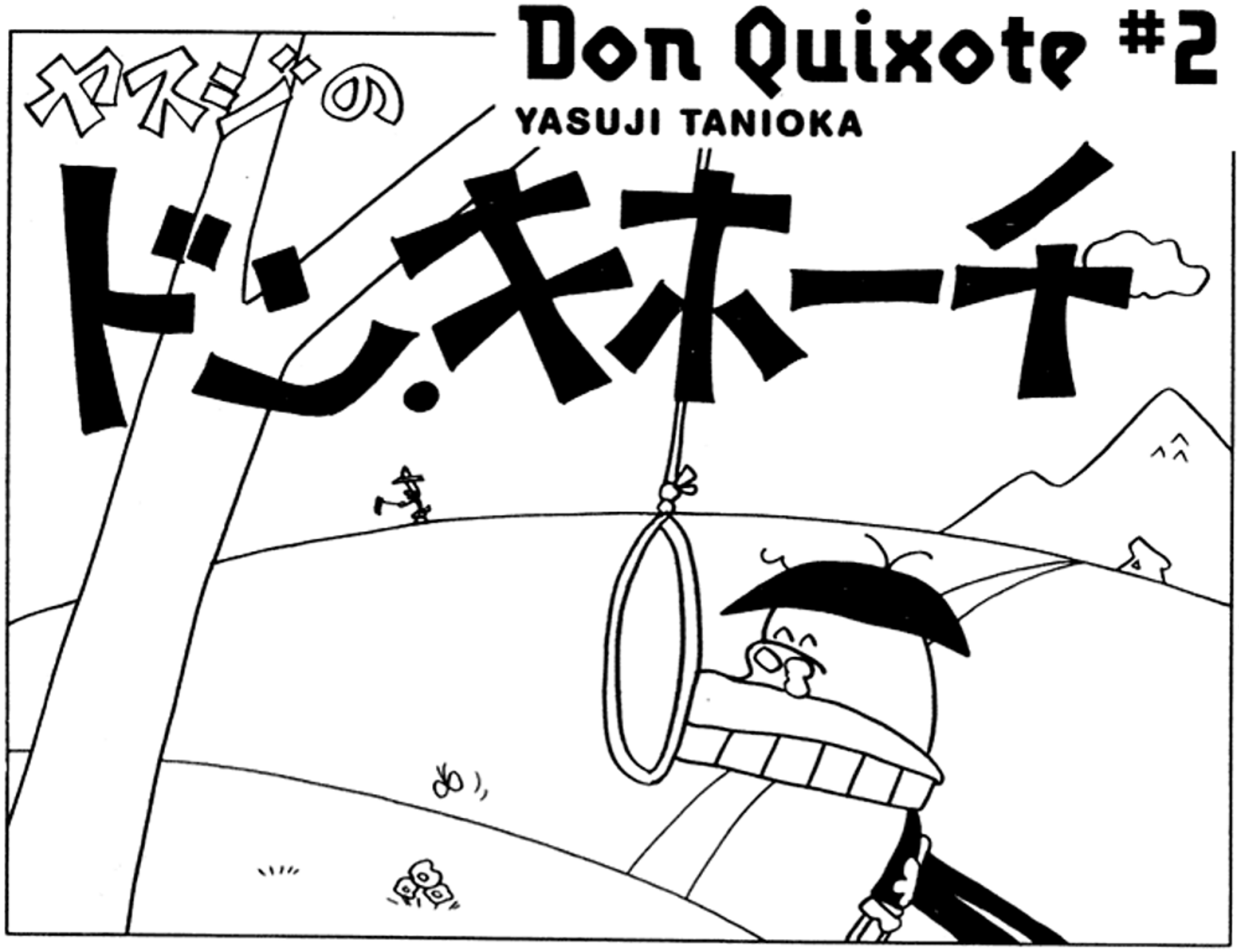

And, of course, you'd be right.

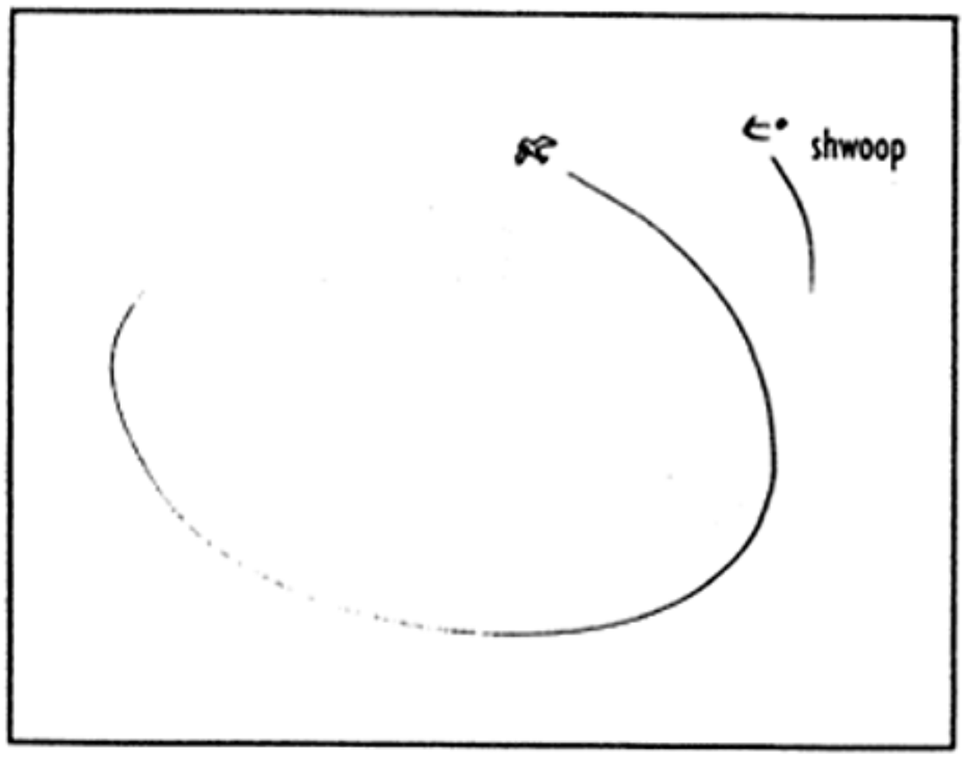

Aren't we the short-tempered one. Please just wait 'til I'm finished.
O.K.?
Why, you little prick!
Wait! Wait!
I've even seen cases where witnesses have dropped stone-dead from the shock after seeing the contorted, mangled, utter hideousness of the executed guy's face.
So lighten up.

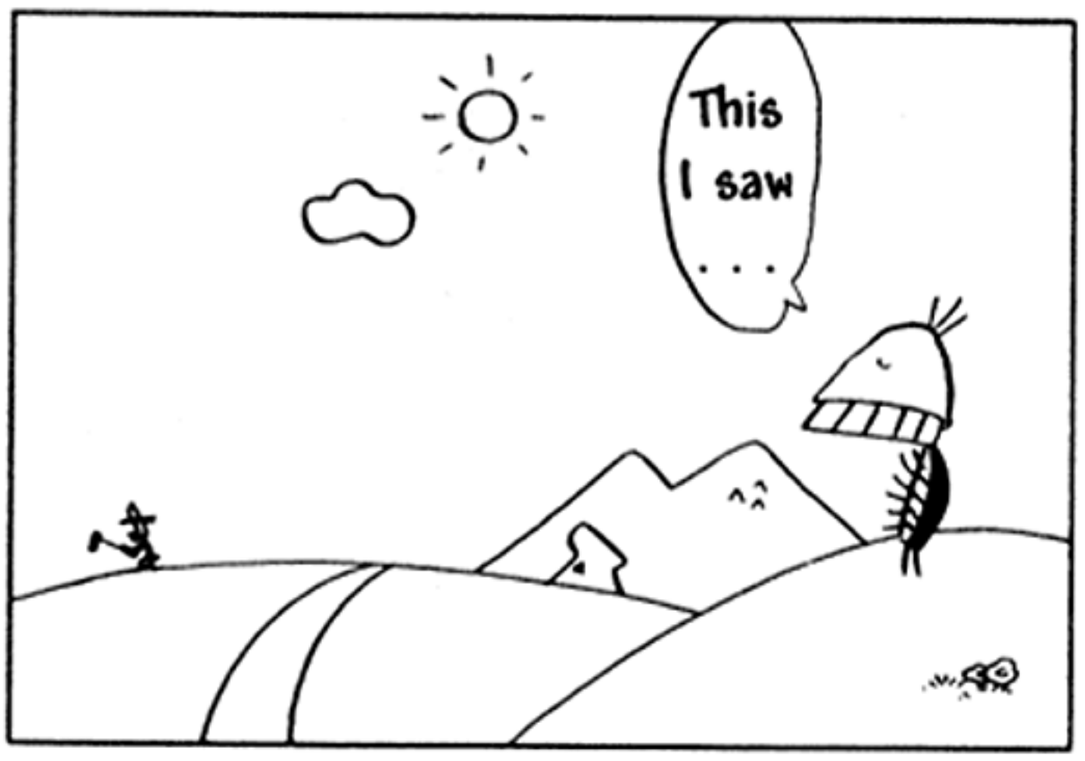
Don Quixote #2

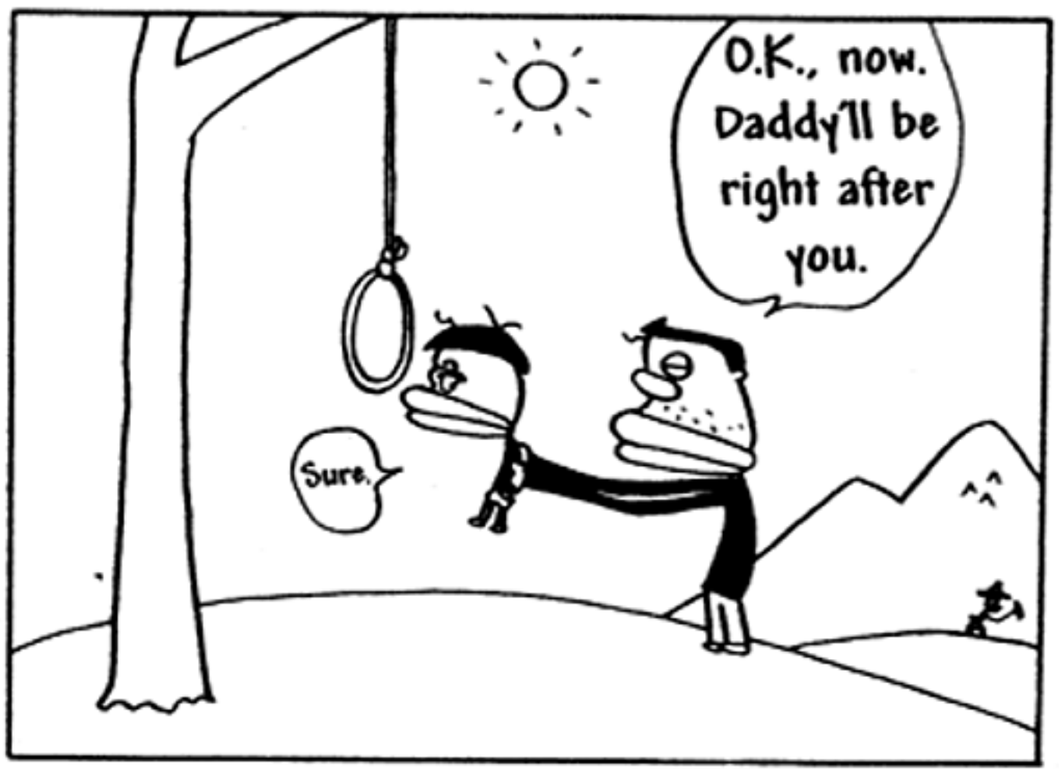
YASUJI TANIOKA

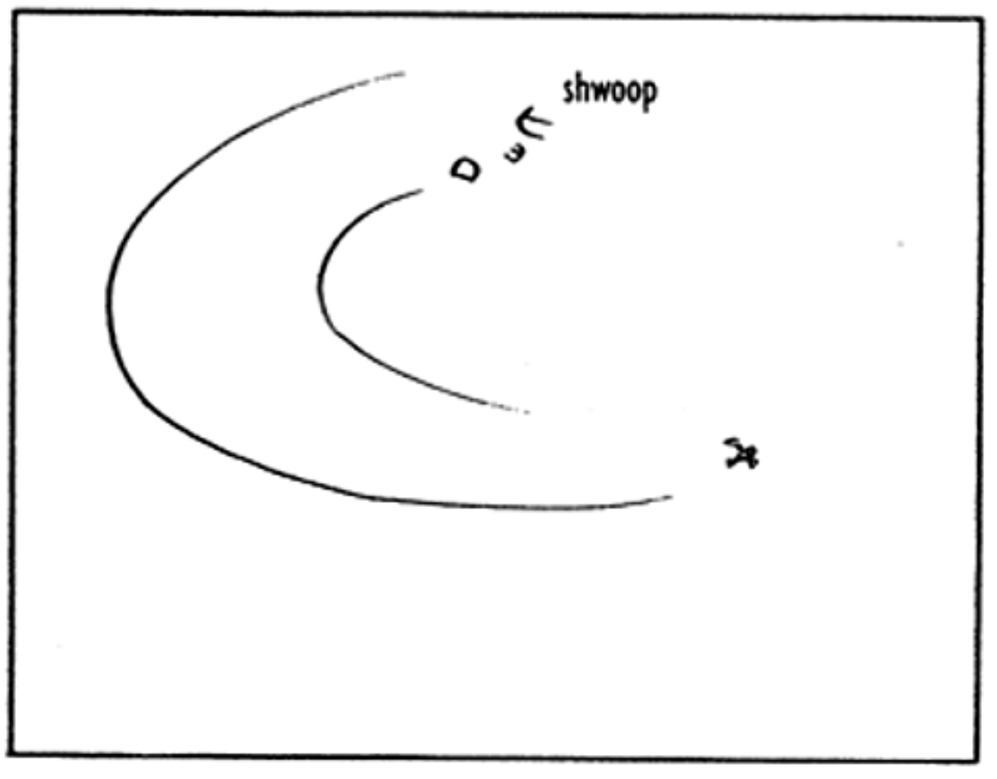
タニオジの ドン・キホーテ











Well, I can't help it.

Wha?

Ha, ha, ha!

I'm sorry. Daddy's down on his luck, and it all gets taken out on you.

nobody wants me.

Daddy's eloping and . . .

What's that mean?

ドッシーン

dah-oinga

Mommy ran away and now you. Please, let's get this over with.

There's nothing in this world worth living for anyway.

Don't worry.

Hey—
Get on
with it
already!!

Say hi to
your girl-
friend.

Whether
I forgive you
or not,
you're still
my dad.

Forgive
me?

Gajio, Gajio!
Forgive me—
Daddy was
wrong!

No, no.
As long as
you're
completely
remorseful I
have no
problem.

You won't
mention
this to any-
one?

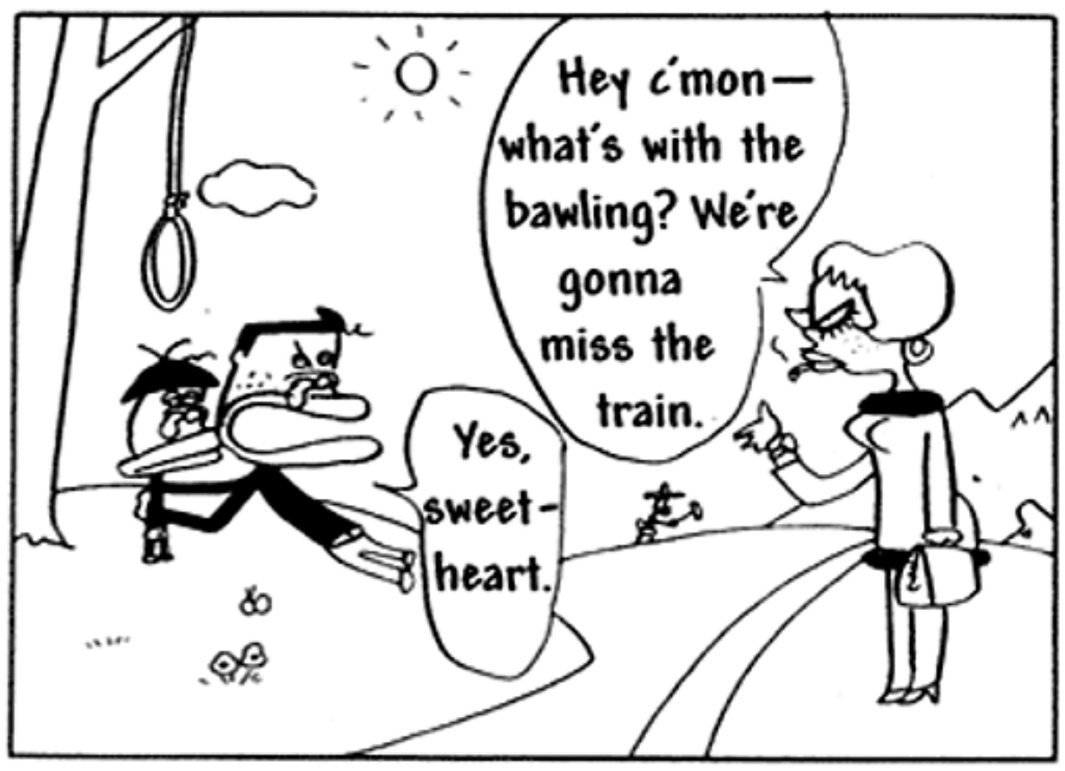
Daddy!!

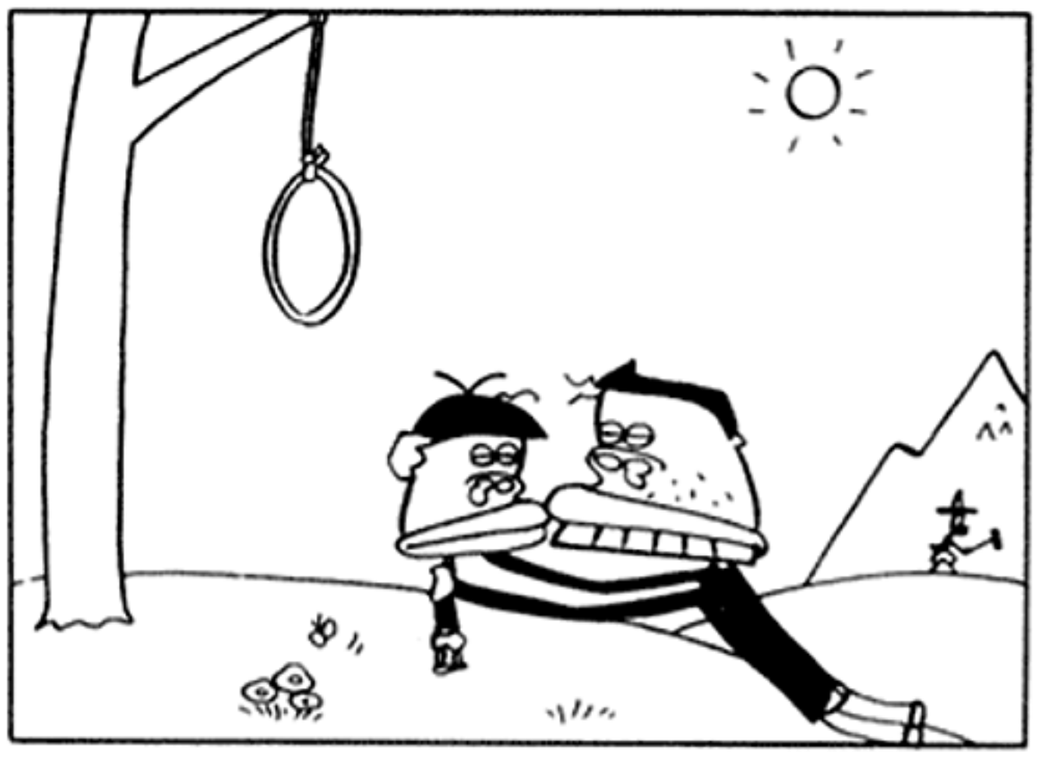
Gajio!!

No,
no.

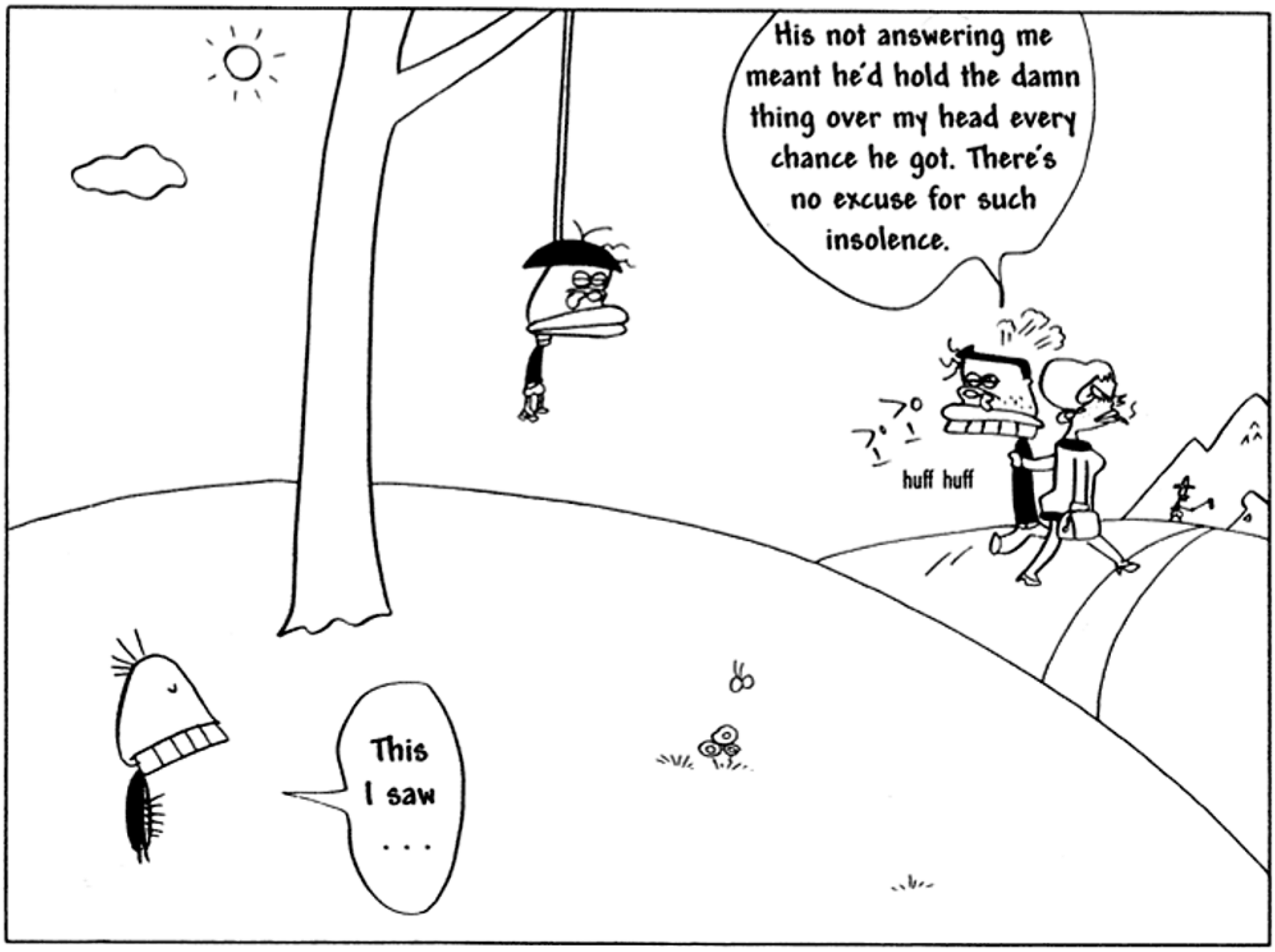
You're not going to
hold it over my head
that I almost killed you
so I could run off with
my lover?

Gajio—There's no more time. Daddy has to leave now—sob! sob!


Hey c'mon—what's with the bawling? We're gonna miss the train.
Yes, sweet-heart.



So you won't mention this, even if we run into each other some time down the road? Of course, by then I'll be back on top, with a new suit and everything.
So you won't be ashamed of me.

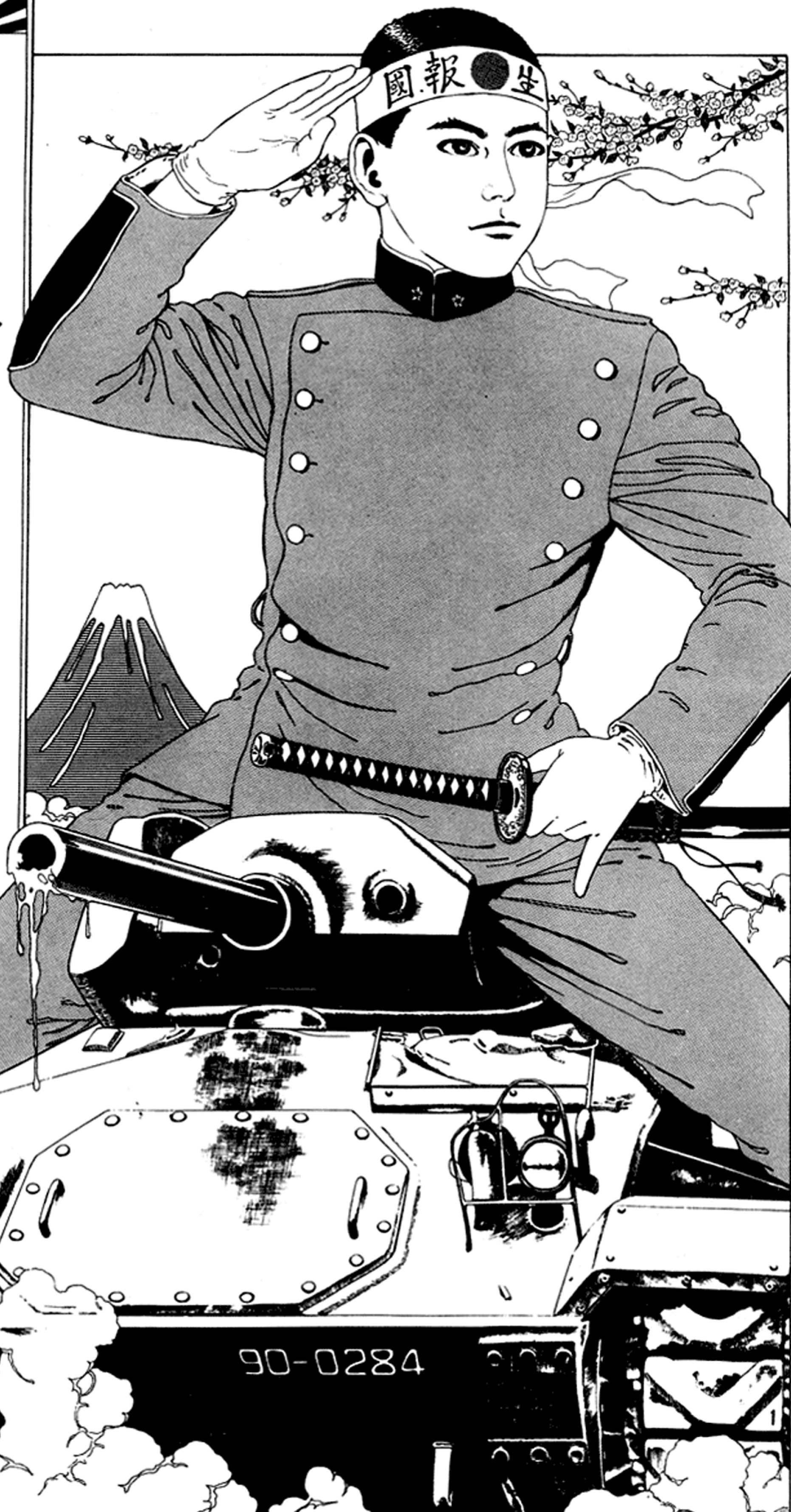

His not answering me meant he'd hold the damn thing over my head every chance he got. There's no excuse for such insolence.
huff huff
This I saw . . .

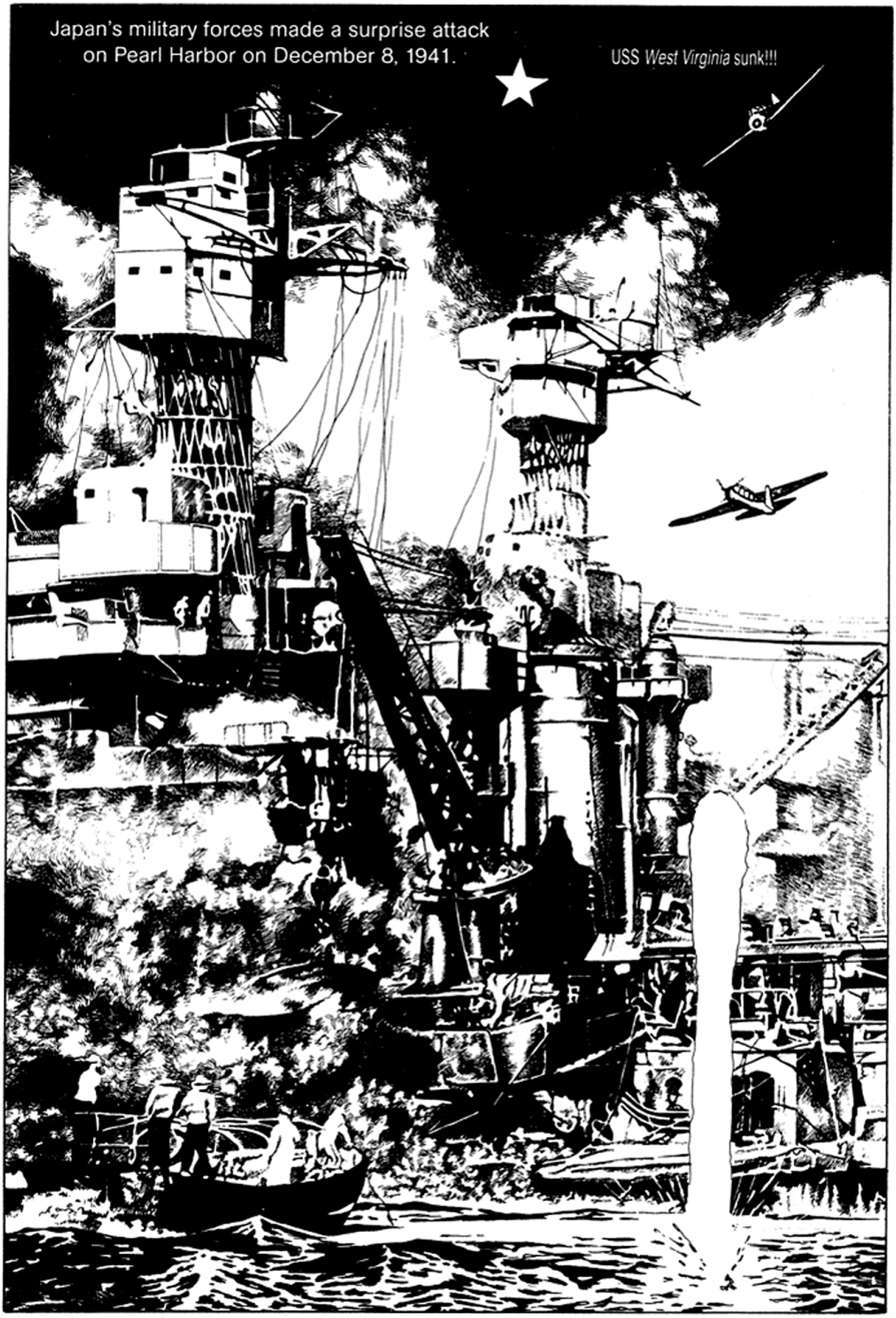
END

日本人の惑星

Planet of the Jap

SUEHIRO MARUO




Japan's military forces made a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 8, 1941.
USS *West Virginia* sunk!!!

The damages sustained by the U.S. included 340 warplanes crashed or destroyed, four battleships sunk, two of which were entirely destroyed and the other two seriously damaged.

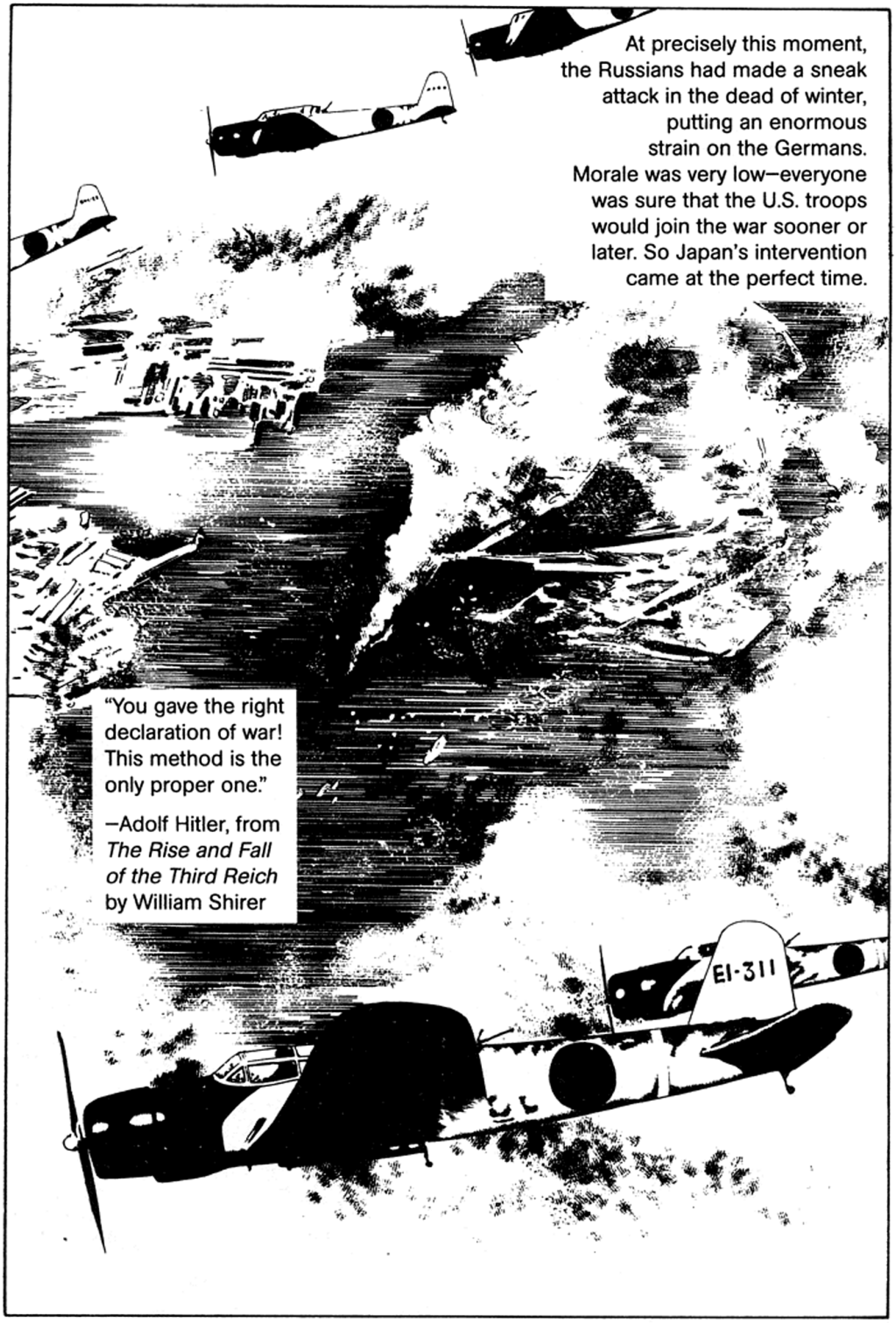
Nine battle cruisers and destroyers were sunk.

This meant war.

The attack of the Japanese naval forces was extremely skillful. There was nothing the U.S. forces could do.

Oh!! My God!

BANG


At precisely this moment, the Russians had made a sneak attack in the dead of winter, putting an enormous strain on the Germans. Morale was very low—everyone was sure that the U.S. troops would join the war sooner or later. So Japan's intervention came at the perfect time.
"You gave the right declaration of war! This method is the only proper one."
—Adolf Hitler, from *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* by William Shirer
EI-311

After their unprecedented declaration of war, Japanese troops continued to attack successfully.

Nobody could beat the Japanese troops.

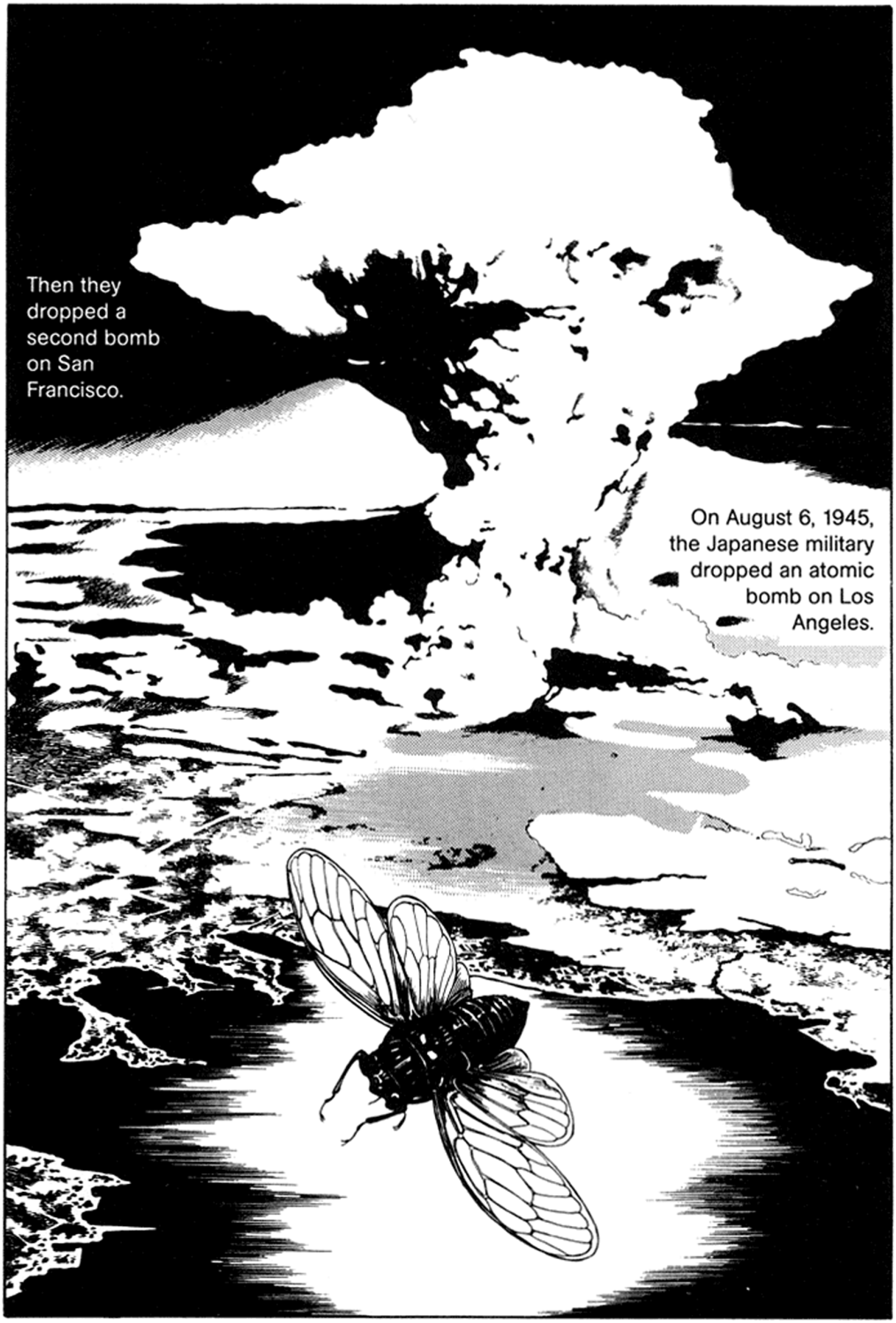
HE
99999
The Japanese died valiantly.

Chicago under attack.

The evacuation of the masses.

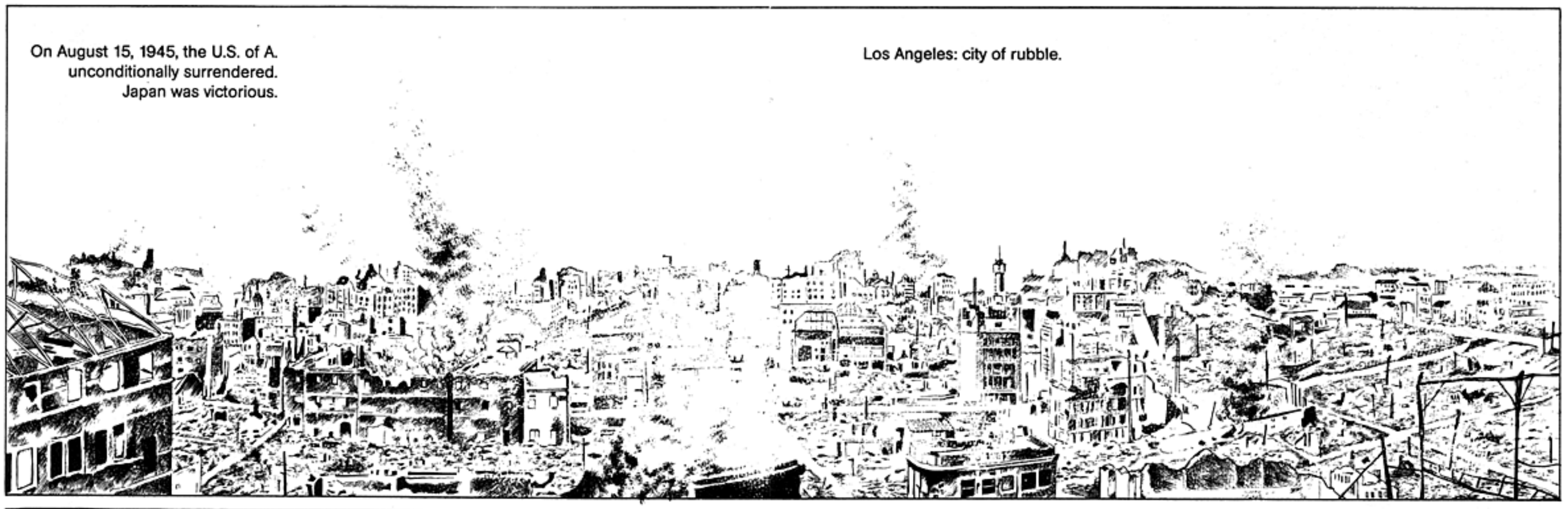
And, finally . . .

Exhausted American soldiers, drained of all their fighting spirit.


Then they dropped a second bomb on San Francisco.
On August 6, 1945, the Japanese military dropped an atomic bomb on Los Angeles.

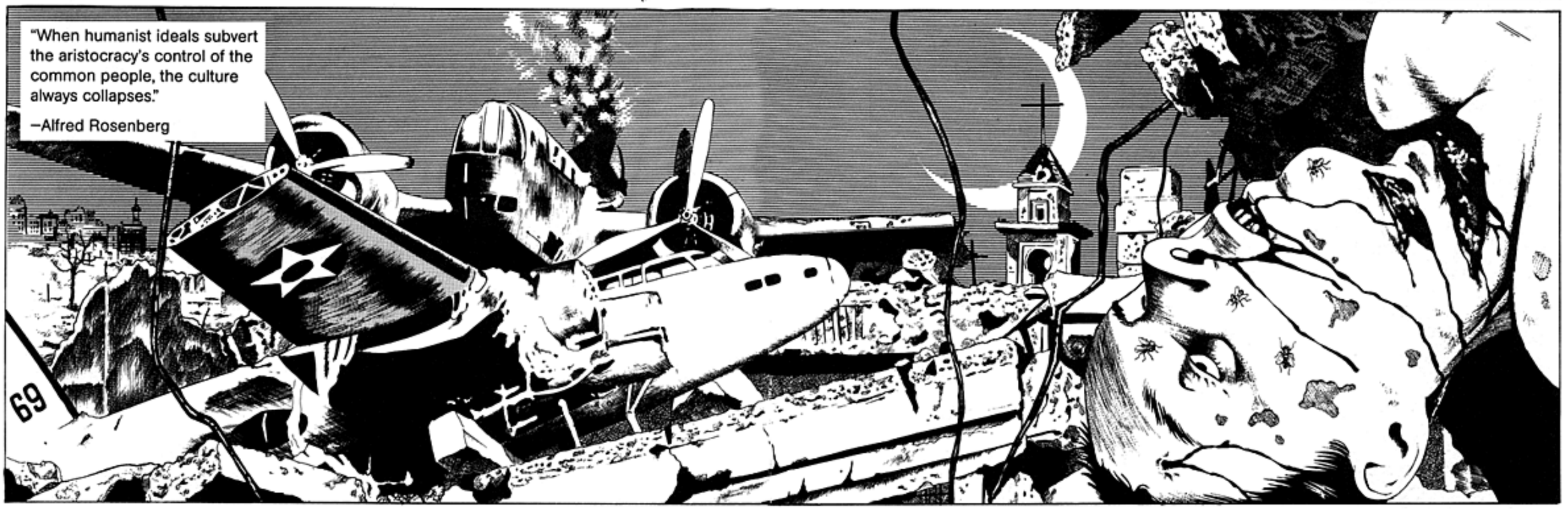
On August 15, 1945, the U.S. of A. unconditionally surrendered. Japan was victorious.

Los Angeles: city of rubble.



"When humanist ideals subvert the aristocracy's control of the common people, the culture always collapses."

–Alfred Rosenberg



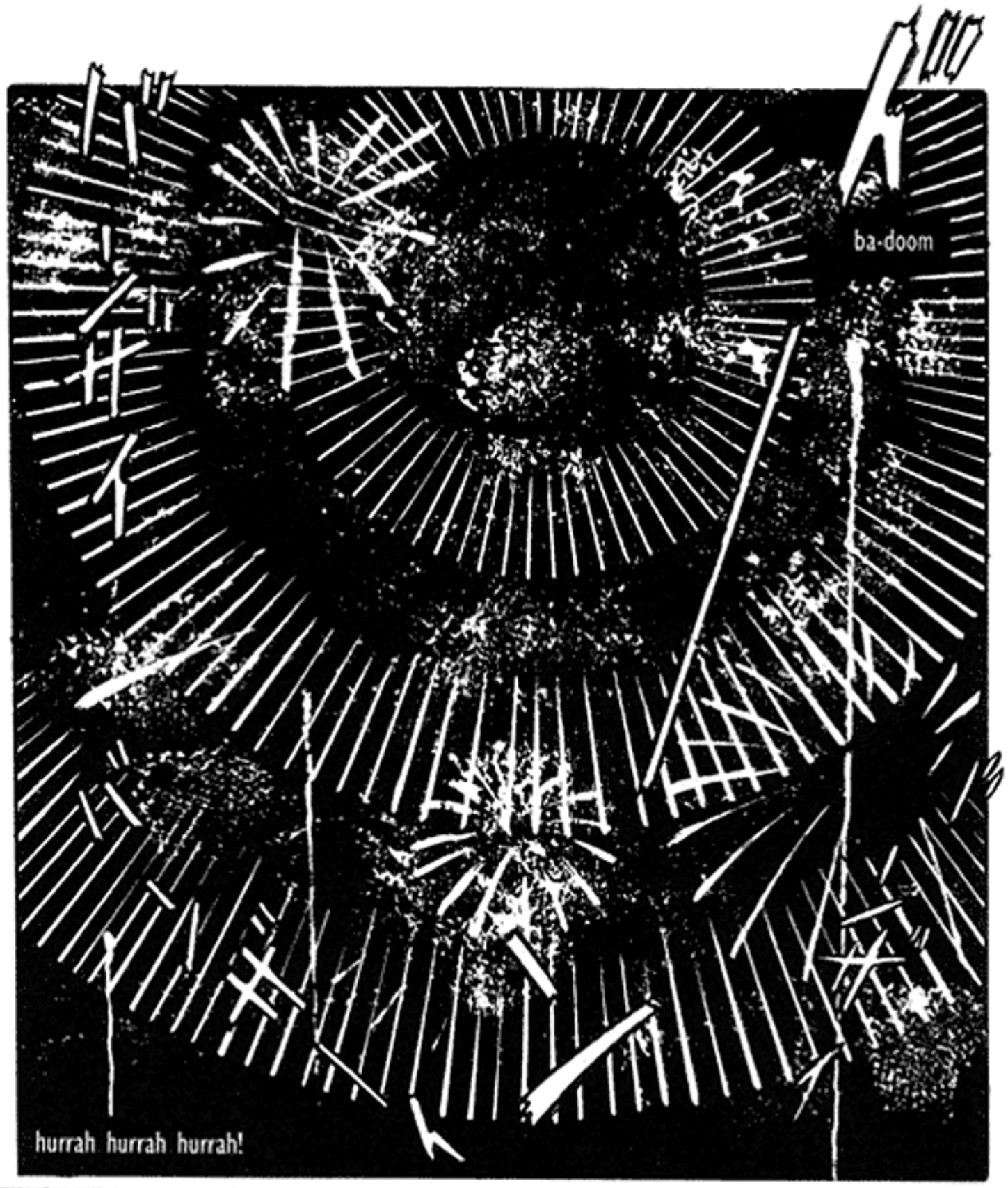
In the allied country
of Germany, Hirohito's Youth
are marching in Berlin.

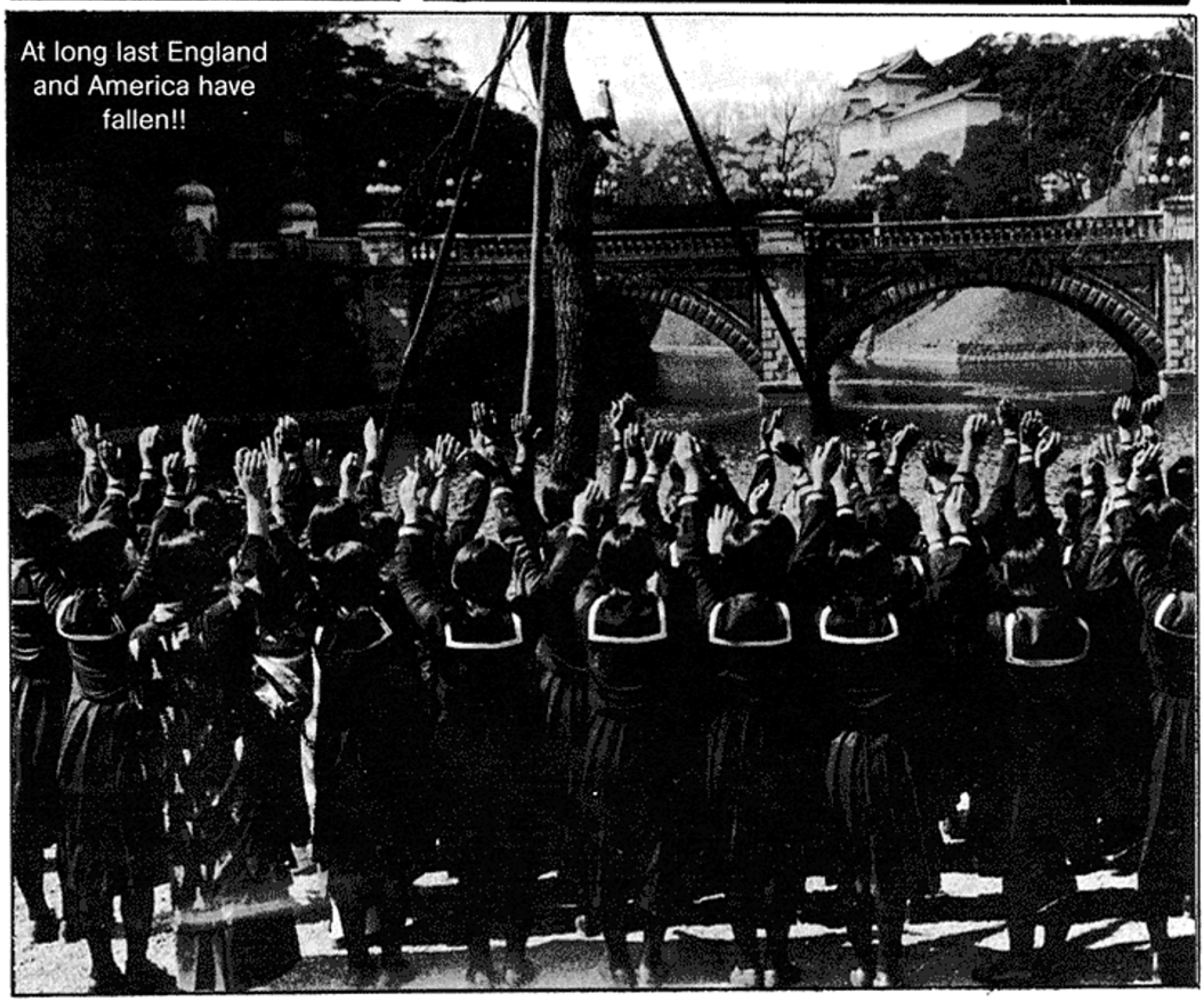
dan

dan dan dan

dan dan dan

da da da da da da da da


ba-doom
hurrah hurrah hurrah!


At long last England and America have fallen!!

Tojo stepped down to the tarmac slowly . . . making the first step of Japan's occupation of America.

Hideki Tojo

GREAT JAPAN

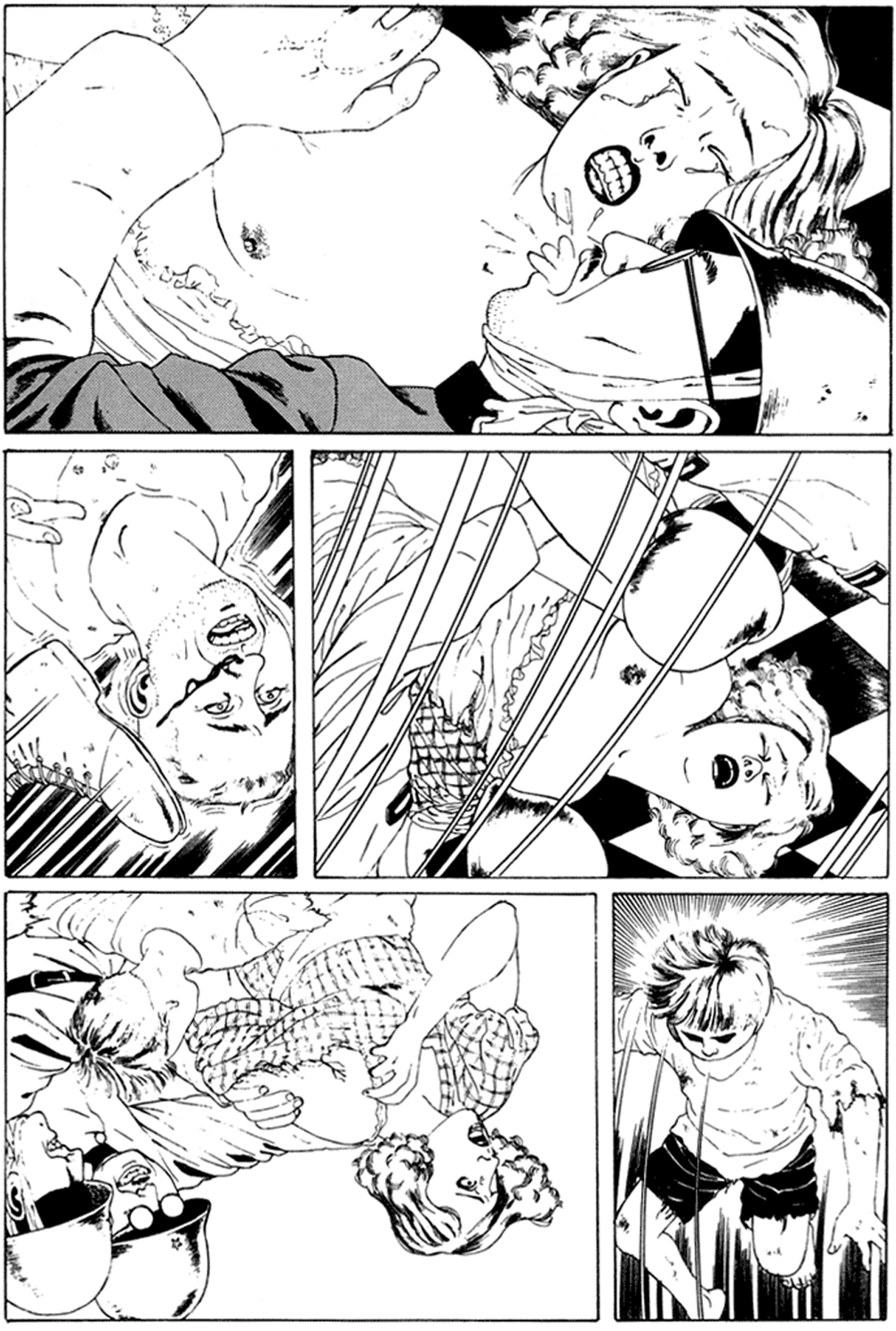
The Statue of Liberty is now just an ugly woman attacked by the plague.

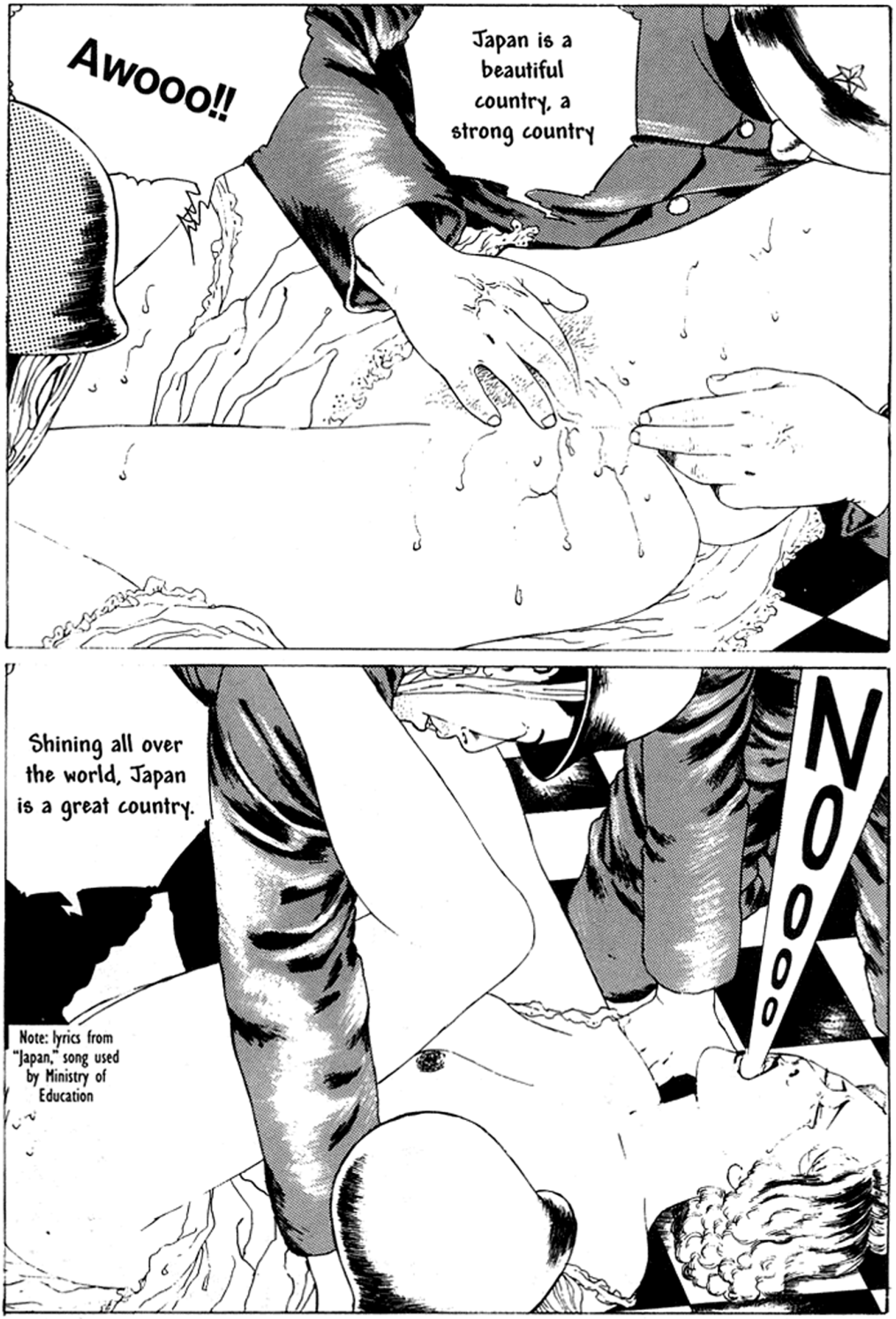
Hurrah death and destruction!!

GREAT JAPANESE EMPIRE

thomp

Hey Mommy. you wanna suck on this?




Awooo!!
Japan is a beautiful country, a strong country
Shining all over the world, Japan is a great country.
NO
Note: lyrics from "Japan," song used by Ministry of Education

Shut up. Stop that crying!!

Wahhoooo

Wah wah wah wah wah wah

Wah

Damn it!

Wah wah

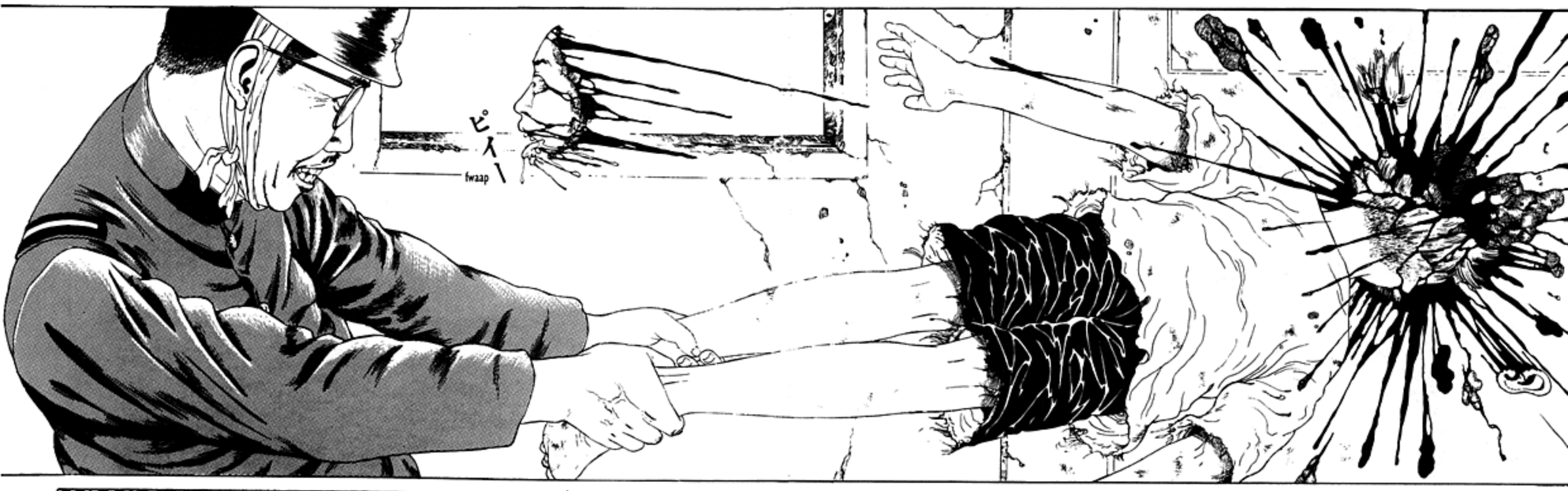
zoop

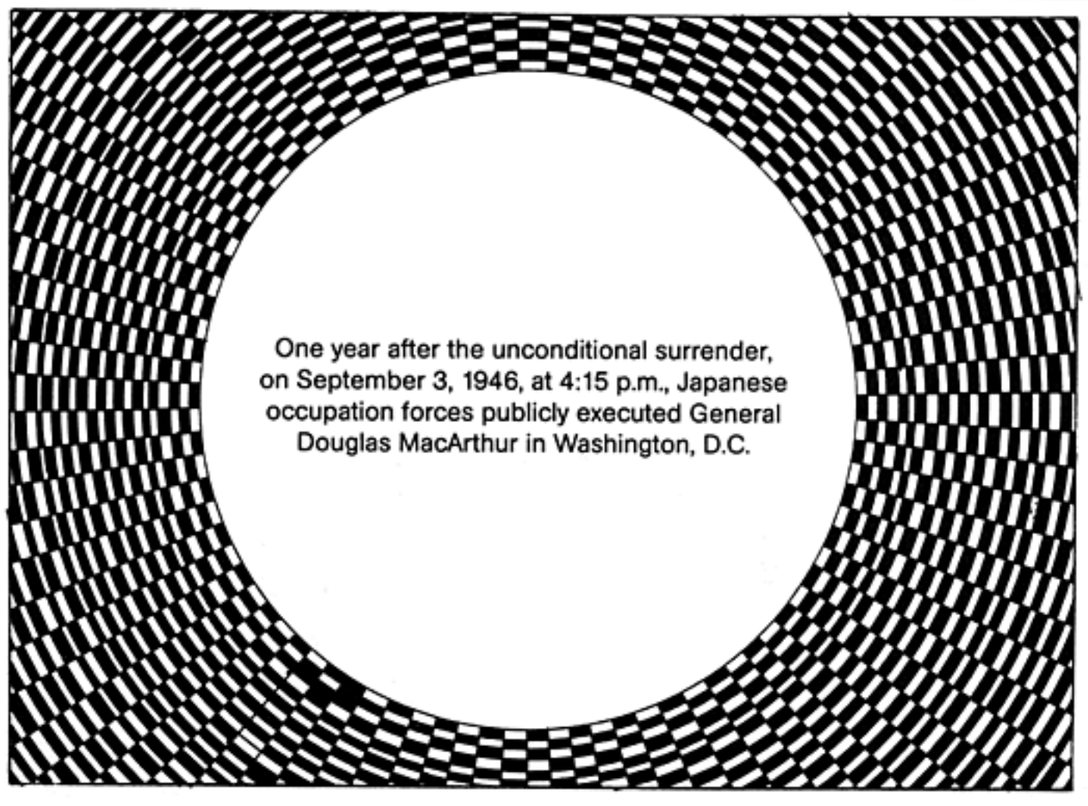
ぬっ

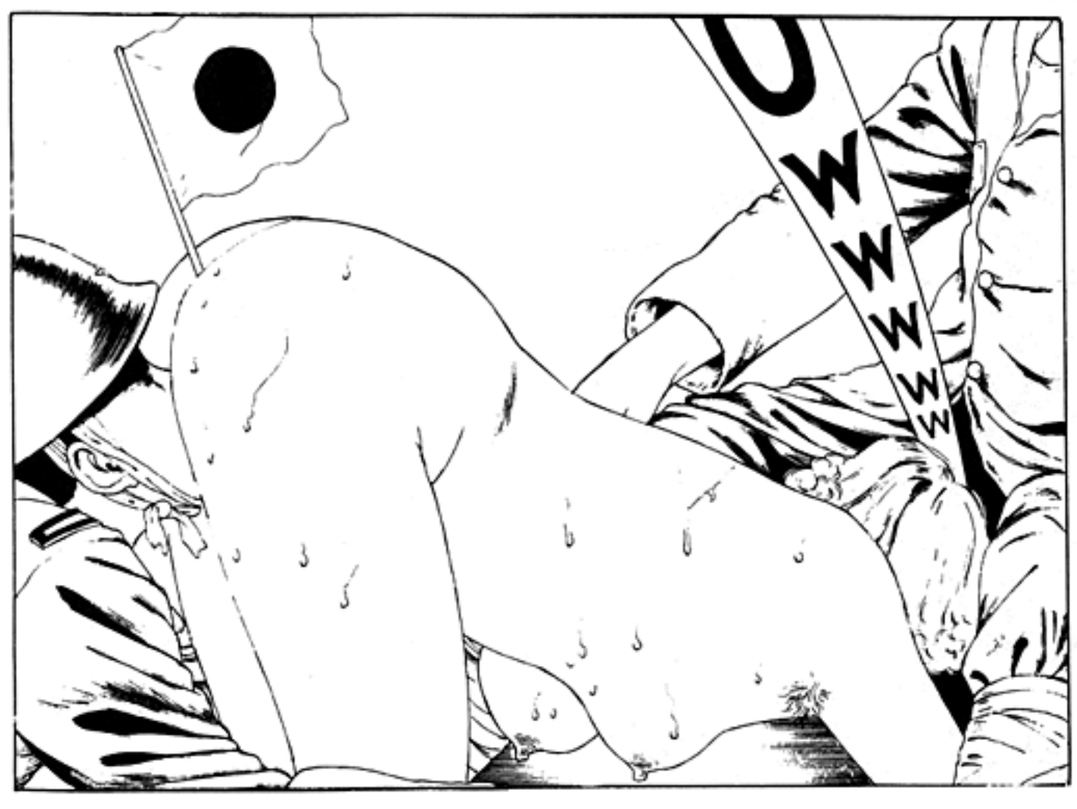
!!

nnngh

fhoop fhoop
Waah!!


ピ
ィ
fwzap

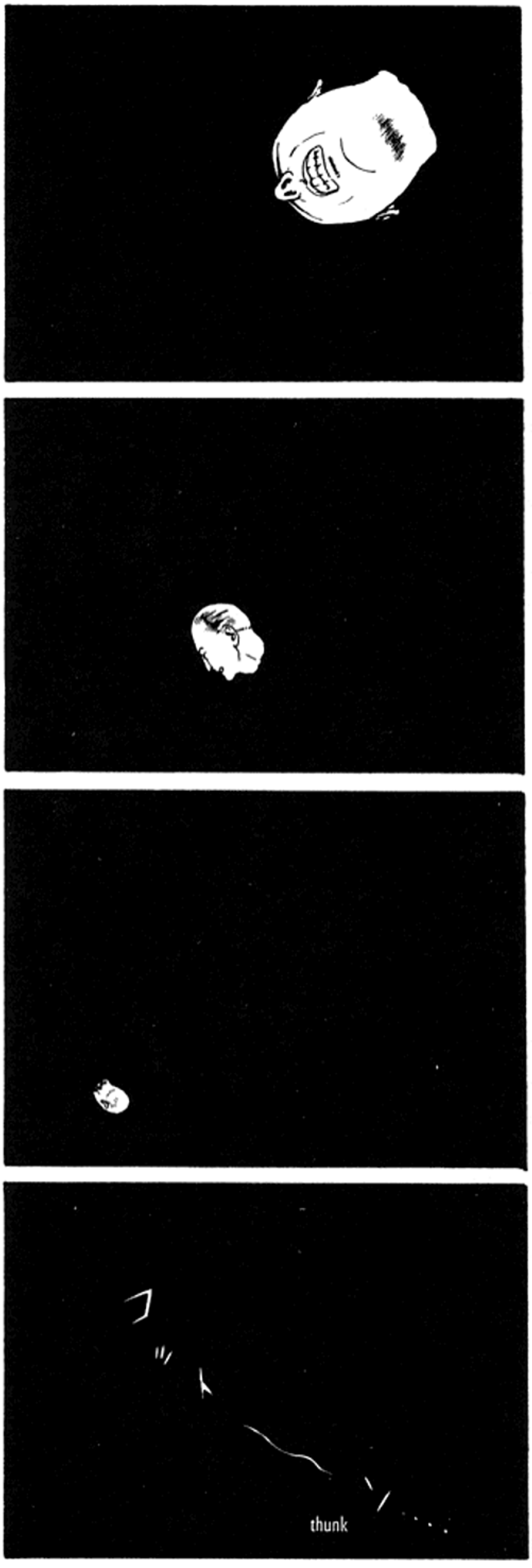

One year after the unconditional surrender, on September 3, 1946, at 4:15 p.m., Japanese occupation forces publicly executed General Douglas MacArthur in Washington, D.C.

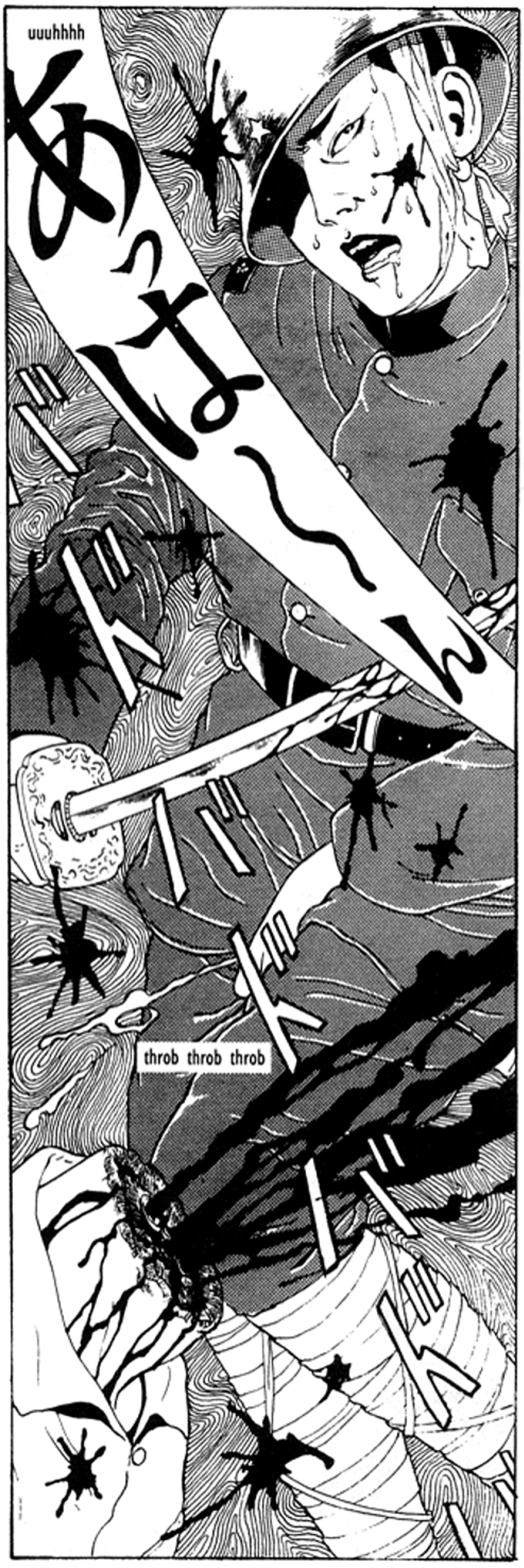

WWWWWW

Let him keep his sunglasses on.

ちょっと！

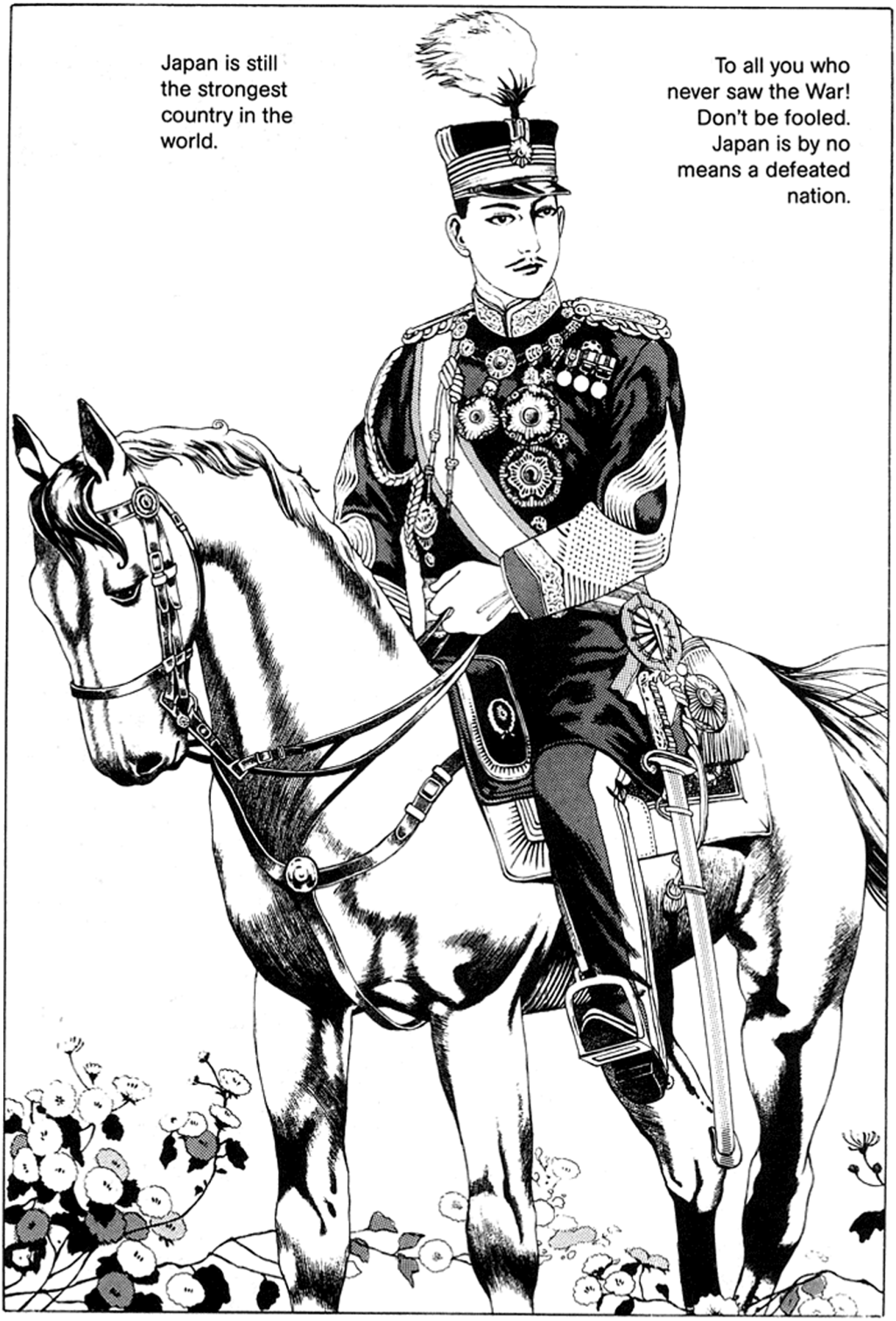
ssshwack


thunk


uuuhhhh
throb throb throb

Japan is still the strongest country in the world.

To all you who never saw the War! Don't be fooled. Japan is by no means a defeated nation.



END

Mary's Asshole

HANAKO YAMADA

マリアのAナス

1ST TALE *ASSHOLE OF PEACE*

Have you noticed how everybody always feels like they have to fondle babies whenever they are around them?
Pattern #2
kya ha ha
Peek-a-boo!

Yoko, girl from Yokosuka

I don't even look at anyone but you, Akira.

lick lick

You're sure? You're sure there's no one else?

lick lick

Of course!

Lying through her teeth

Tell me, Hiyoko— Am I the only one you love?

Actually, she took it out of a box and stuck it in the oven.

yay!

Yes! See how hard I worked for you?

Wow— Looks great! Did you make all this yourself?

Don't talk such nonsense. Please, let's have some dinner.

Kemeko, my love

He's not listening.

duh

clatter clatter

So what? The world is good because there are two sides to every coin.

Pop-star Kemeko

These sweet-looking pop-star types usually turn out to be incredibly crass.

Mary's Asshole

マリアの肛門

2ND TALE

WHY, I'D LIKE TO . . .

Her lunch looks better than mine . . .

Dig in!

Good Lord, what a terrible thought.

I'm not eating this slop!

ボボボ

blop blop

Hmphh– This isn't so great.

nyrmm

Hey, I want yours–take mine!!

zoop zoop

Why worry about it?

But I honestly enjoy having these thoughts.

ケ

!!

Who cares!

Behave yourself.

Great!

How's yours?

I have to stop imagining these things.

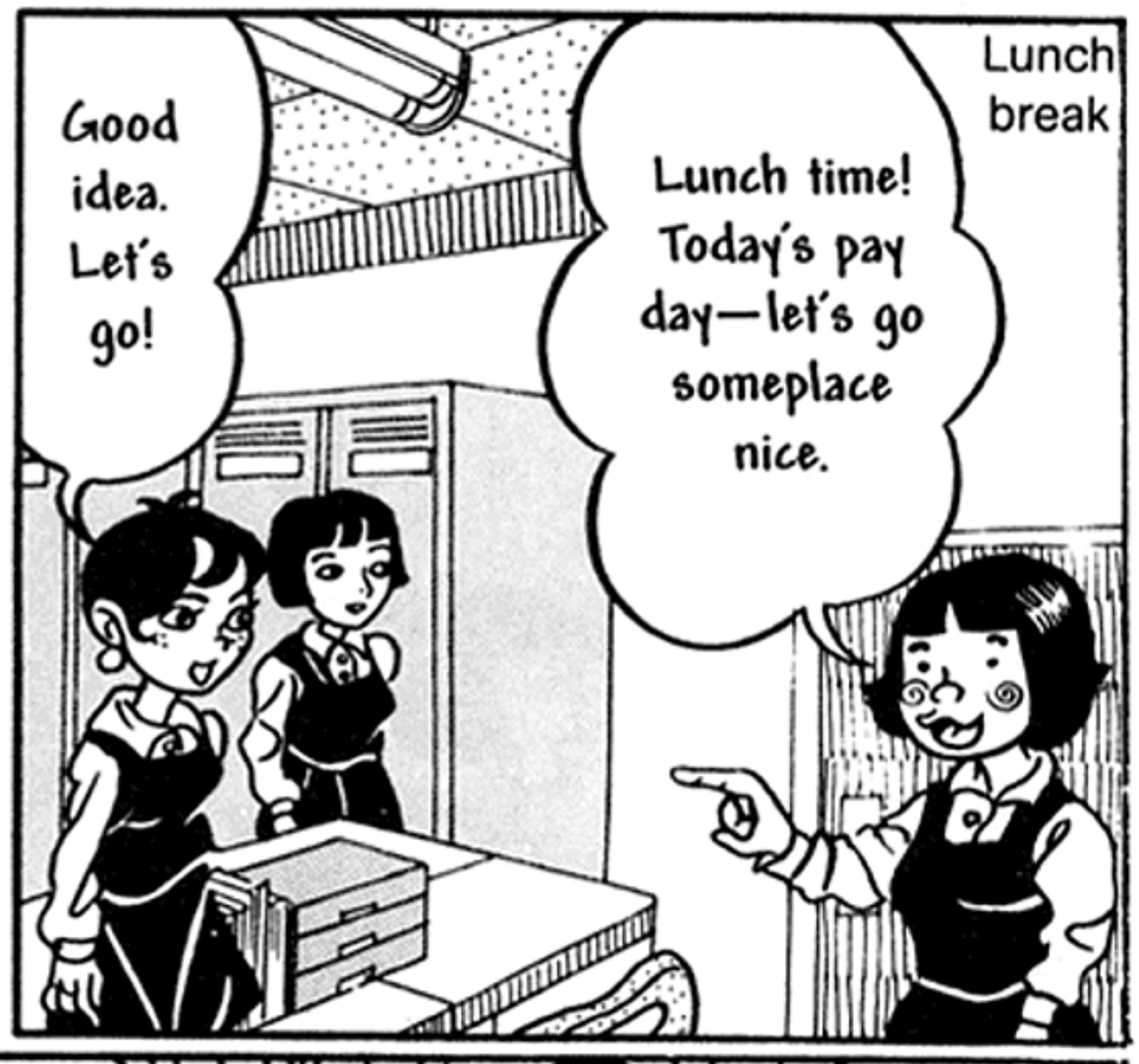
ランチセット

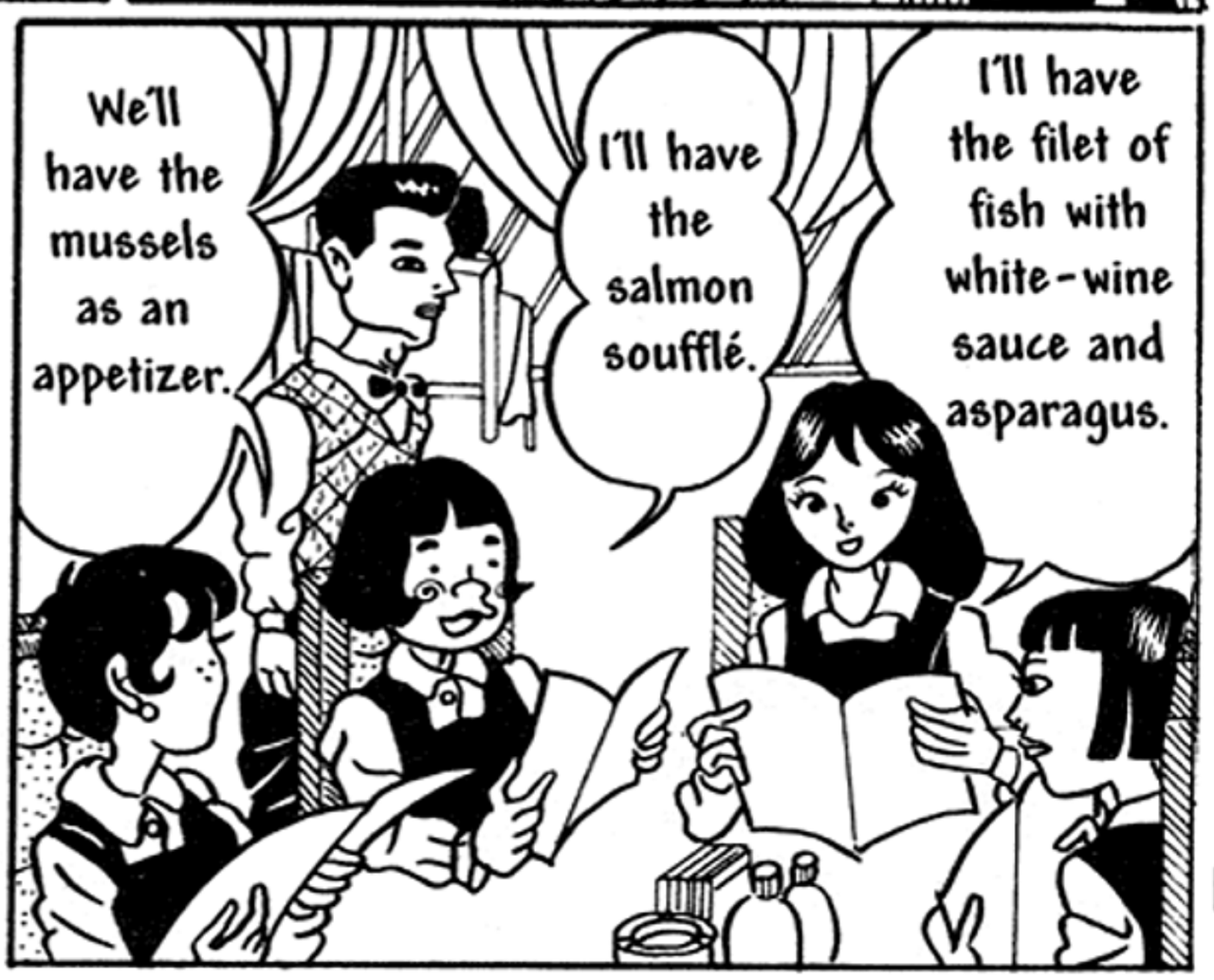
マリアのAIDS

Mary's Asshole

3RD TALE

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE




We'll have the mussels as an appetizer.
I'll have the salmon soufflé.
I'll have the filet of fish with white-wine sauce and asparagus.

They're all going to share.

A pack of vulgar pigs

myumm

gyumm

gyumm

myumm

nyum nyum

nyar nyar

No matter how refined we try to act, as soon as the food is put down in front of us we turn into grotesque beasts.

gulp gulp

stuff stuff

Silent fart

Listen to these arrogant pigs carrying on like human beings. Have they no shame?

No, they're pigs.

ksss

Absolutely!

How about from now on we eat at a four-star restaurant once a month?

We simply must do this again.

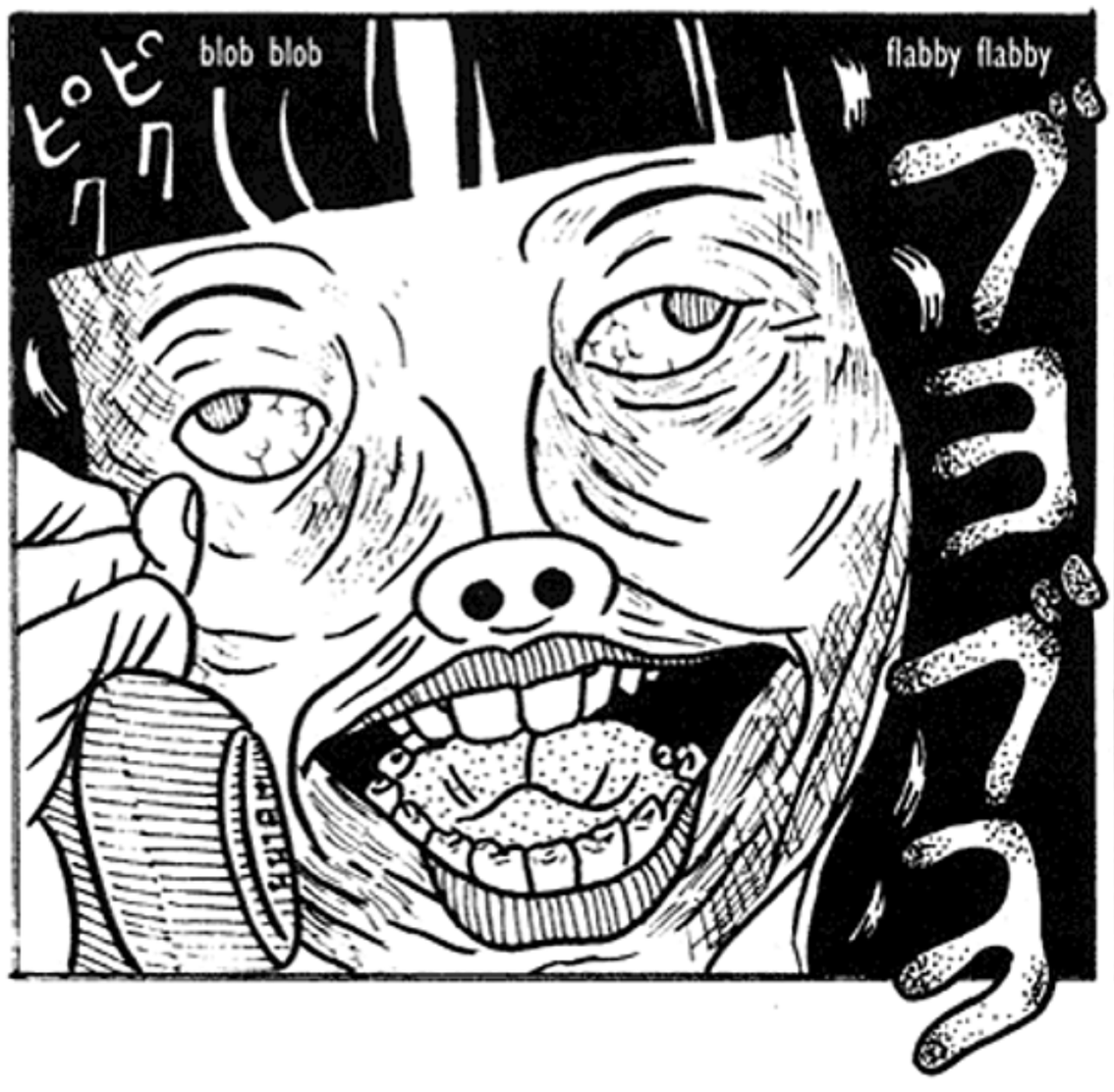
That was so deli-cious.

マリアの肛門

Mary's Asshole

4TH TALE

THE FACE OF ANOTHER



jiggle

wiggle

jiggle

wiggle

I'm the only human being here.

shudder

blahghh

Mooaan . . .

flab
flab

HA! You— The Creature!

Don't be ashamed— I'm your friend.

God, I'm sorry.

Junko— Are you all right?

Mary's Asshole 2

5TH TALE *LIBERATION EYEDROPS*

gyaah
gyaah
銀座
GINZA
Where on earth am I?
woof
flutter
Soulless ghosts
Junko, what's wrong?
Here's your pay.
Great
Boss
Don't come any closer, you mon-sters!!
Huh ?!
YAAA!!!
shuffle
Good morning, Junko.
shuffle
Next morning
By evening, Junko's vision was restored (as well as her week's pay, thank goodness).
Now I see! These eyedrops really "open your eyes" for 24 hours.
I can't believe I worked so hard for this crap!
What—?! Nothing but shells and dead leaves??!!
flitter flitter

Mary's Asshole

6TH TALE *EYE TO EYE*

That stuff is nothing but bubblegum music, isn't it?

Michael Jackson

Gives her friends wacky nicknames (Spare me) →

Hey Junkster! What are you listening to?

Walkman

Liberation Eyedrops

plink

When I get depressed, my eyes always start to ache.

Now I have to feel ashamed of the music I listen to.

Of course.

Is it? Is that right?

goo goo

scrape

scrape

What on earth!?

WHAT !?

She's strong and has lots of allies. If I confront her face to face, there's no way I can win.

clomp clomp

Now I see—I've been made a fool of by that shit-stained baby.

grrr

I always thought she was such a hip, fashionable woman, but she's actually just a big baby.

You're the coward—you always have to get your way by intimidating everyone!

goo goo

Who did this!? Show your face, coward!

WHA–

snap!

I'm right too, you know!

Mary's Asshole

7TH TALE *PERSISTENCE DOESN'T PAY OFF*

yaah!

She receives a passionate love letter.

Dear Junko,
Though I have to admit I'm no great shakes, nobody can love you as much as I. I would gladly die for you.
Yours,
Nakamura
Sales Department

In the lobby...

gulp

I have two tickets for a movie— Would you like to go with me?

Sorry, I'm real busy today.

I feel bad, but he's not my type.

Then how about tomorrow?

I can't— tomorrow's a very hectic day.

Then what about the day after tomorrow?

I'll be busy for quite some time.

eeugh

Let me know when you're free—I'll always be waiting!

sigh

じ～～っ
bzz bzz
Bouquet
NO!
What's this!?
Liber-ation Eye-drops
plink
These eye-drops will make me feel better.
That guy's waiting for me again today. He's starting to scare me.
stare
じ…
She gets para-lyzed when she's afraid.
Moony eyes
ピシーッ
splat
キモチワリ～
yuck!
Flyswatter
Hey you. You can't fool me talking like a human— You're just a bug.
Junko, my love ♡
シャカ
scurry scurry
Drop Dead
ダレんじゃえ
アハハハ
ha ha ha
ピクピク
gasp grrgh
ニューッ
pfft pfft
ハハハ
ha ha ha
So what?!
I'm serious!
You can't do this to me! This is too much!!
Betrayed by love.

Mary's Asshole

8TH TALE

tremble

Look, that boy is waiting for you again.

WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

There's something I really have to give you—tomorrow at Aomori Park—I'll wait there forever if that's what it takes.

You listen—Just please forget about me, OK?

Please. Just listen to me for a moment.

Junko, please ...

Thank you for coming.

swoon

swoon

AOMORI PARK

He's really crazy about you—I've never seen such devotion.

Junko! I love you!

NO!

Oil portrait

It took me a whole month. I thought of nothing but you while painting it.

crunch

crunch

This is what I think of your picture!

Idiot! Do you think this little thing is going to make me fall head over heels for you?!!

ker-slam

Shit in your pants and drop dead, you son of a bitch!

argh

This is too much!

wizz

wizz

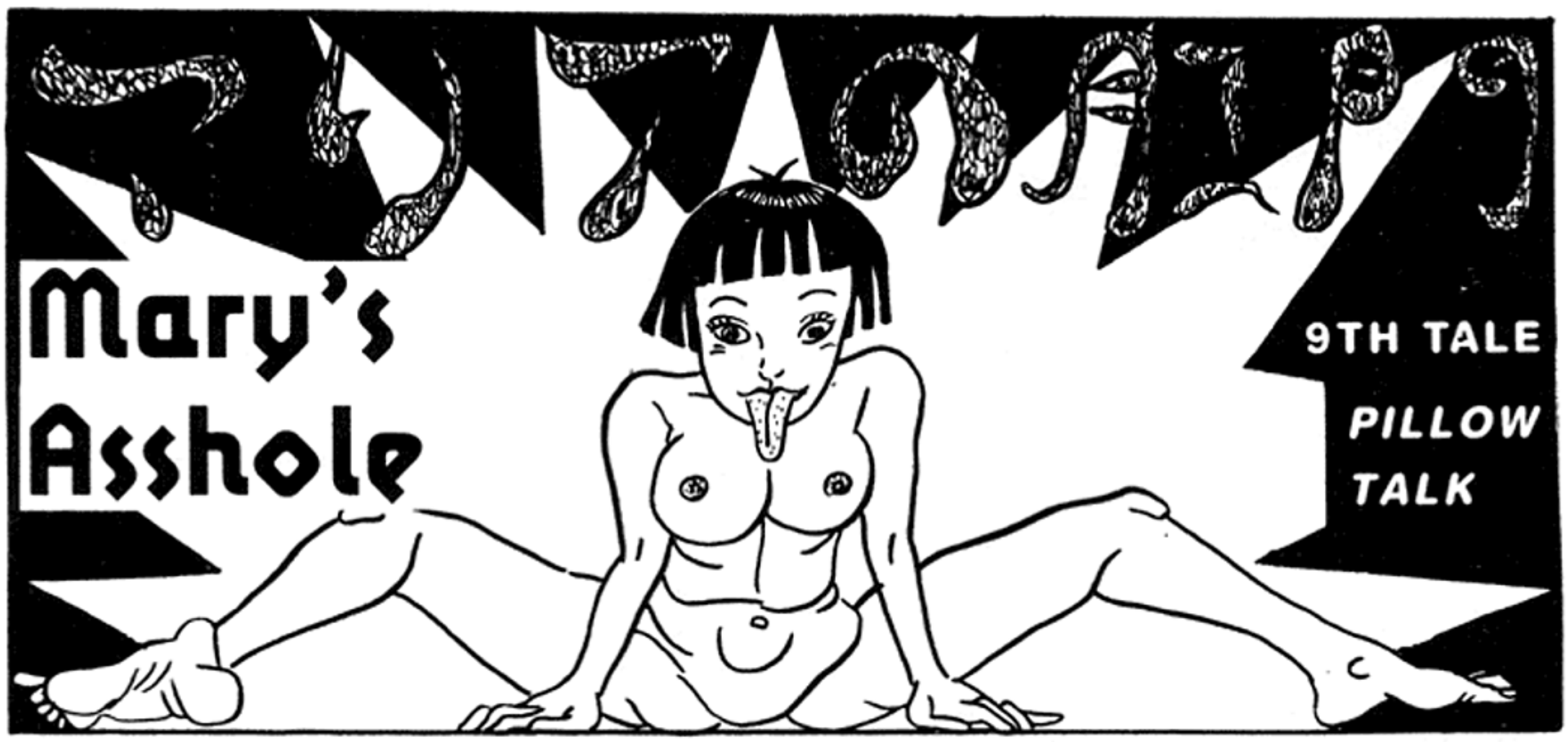
wizz

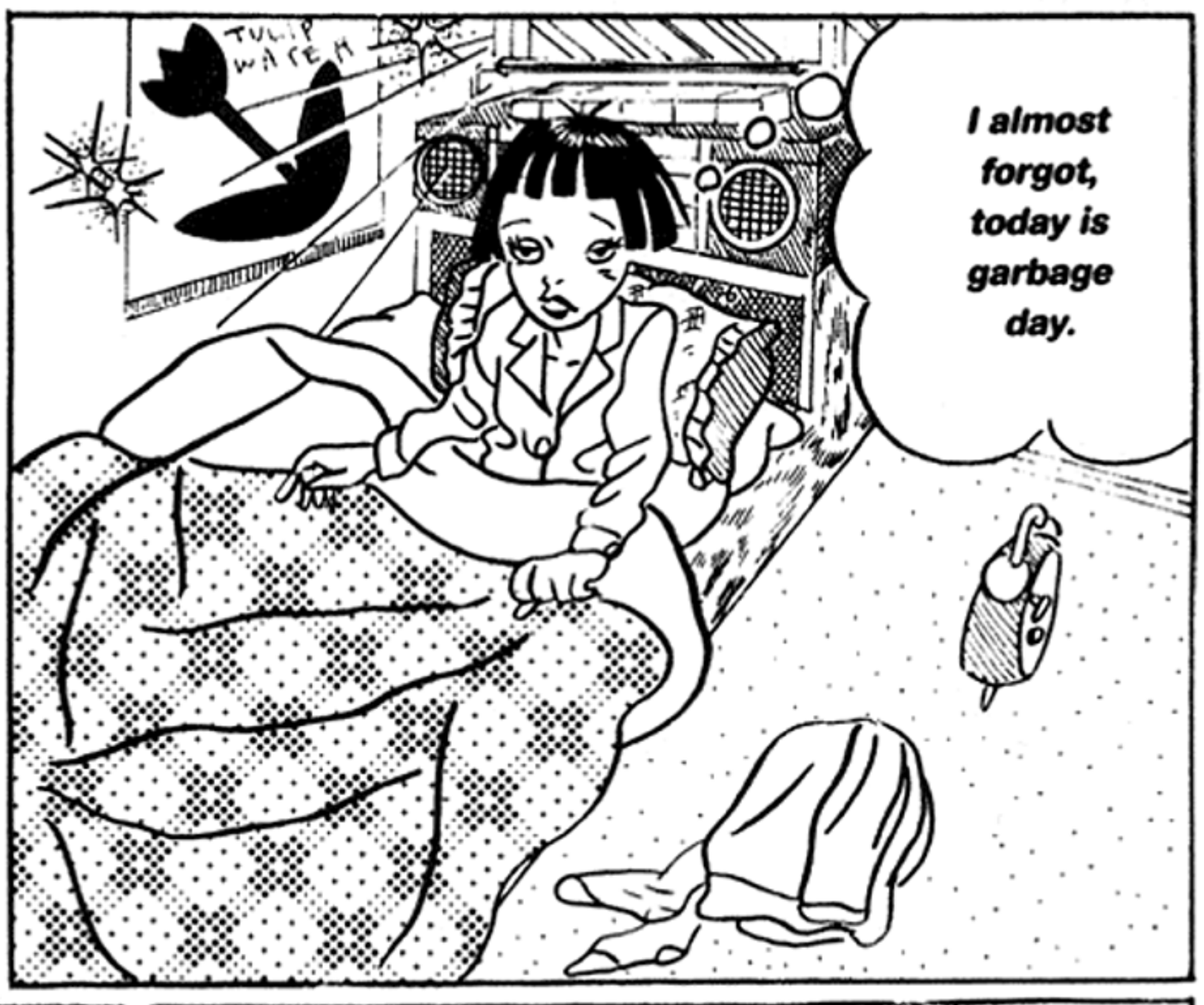
And how do you like this?

ha ha ha ha

Mary's Asshole

9TH TALE
PILLOW TALK





I'll haunt you for-ever.

How dare you throw me away.

Ah, my little pillow!

グスン sob

While at work...

nod

nod

Hey! Where do you think you're off to in the middle of the day?

dash

But I can't get it out of my mind!

More catastrophes in Africa, Iraq, the Soviet Union...

I must be crazy— worrying about such a ridiculous thing.

Right now this pillow means more to me than anything.

stroke

stroke

There's a good girl.

stench

I'm sorry— Forgive me. I'll never throw you away again!

puff

puff

Good, it's still here.

What on earth am I doing?

END

ボルボックス

Voluox

みぎわパン

PAN MIGIWA

On October 31, a fine, clear day, while taking a walk with Beth—

GARBAGE COLLECTION NOTICE

the speck rose up with the fluid in my eye.

When I blinked

I saw a speck of dust in my eye.

ふわ ふわ

float float

it escaped to the edge

As I followed the speck with my eye,

And it fell when I glanced down.

*(Just like how you'd see it in a microscope.)

Dust in the eye is colorless and transparent.*

But then I blinked, and it returned to where I had first seen it.

and disappeared from sight.

we can see specks of dust, motionless in the air.

Look

On bright, sunshiny days in the late after-noon ...

When it's sunny like this, the dust takes on a very prominent color (in this instance, it's green with a rainbow glimmer).

止まれ見よ

キラ

twinkle

キラ

Ha ha ha

There is a round speck sitting on my eyelash.

Direction of sunlight

Dust positioned here

is seen over here.

Some kind of writing...

As I focused on the speck...

Ah

(Please color green)

Looking very closely I could see it is scalloped with a lovely frill

and is patterned like a cookie.

actually turned out to be Sanskrit lettering.

the pattern I first took to be that of a cookie

(Or is it Arabic?)

Foot

Hand

If you know why it looks like this, please get in touch with the Garo Dust Department.

I learned about it the other day, when we used a microscope in science class.

It's a volvox!

Striking resemblance

Organic

Now, this reminded me of something.

Oh yeah, it's a volvox.

Now, whenever I look

on the railroad track

they're sparkling everywhere.

on the old mound

Futagayama old mound

Komaki Line

My eyelashes are full of dust.

woof

Ah, they're surrounding Beth.

I won't let it get to me.

I won't let it get to me.

Good

Good

mandala

the dust gathered.

I won't let it get to me.

As I watched the sun set . . .

but then you're bound to double your pain.

キラ twinkle

You may double your pleasure . . .

What a pretty little bowl.

I won't be overwhelmed.

I won't be overwhelmed.

I won't be overwhelmed.

I won't be overwhelmed.

whoosh whoosh

whoosh whoosh

END

BIGGER and BETTER

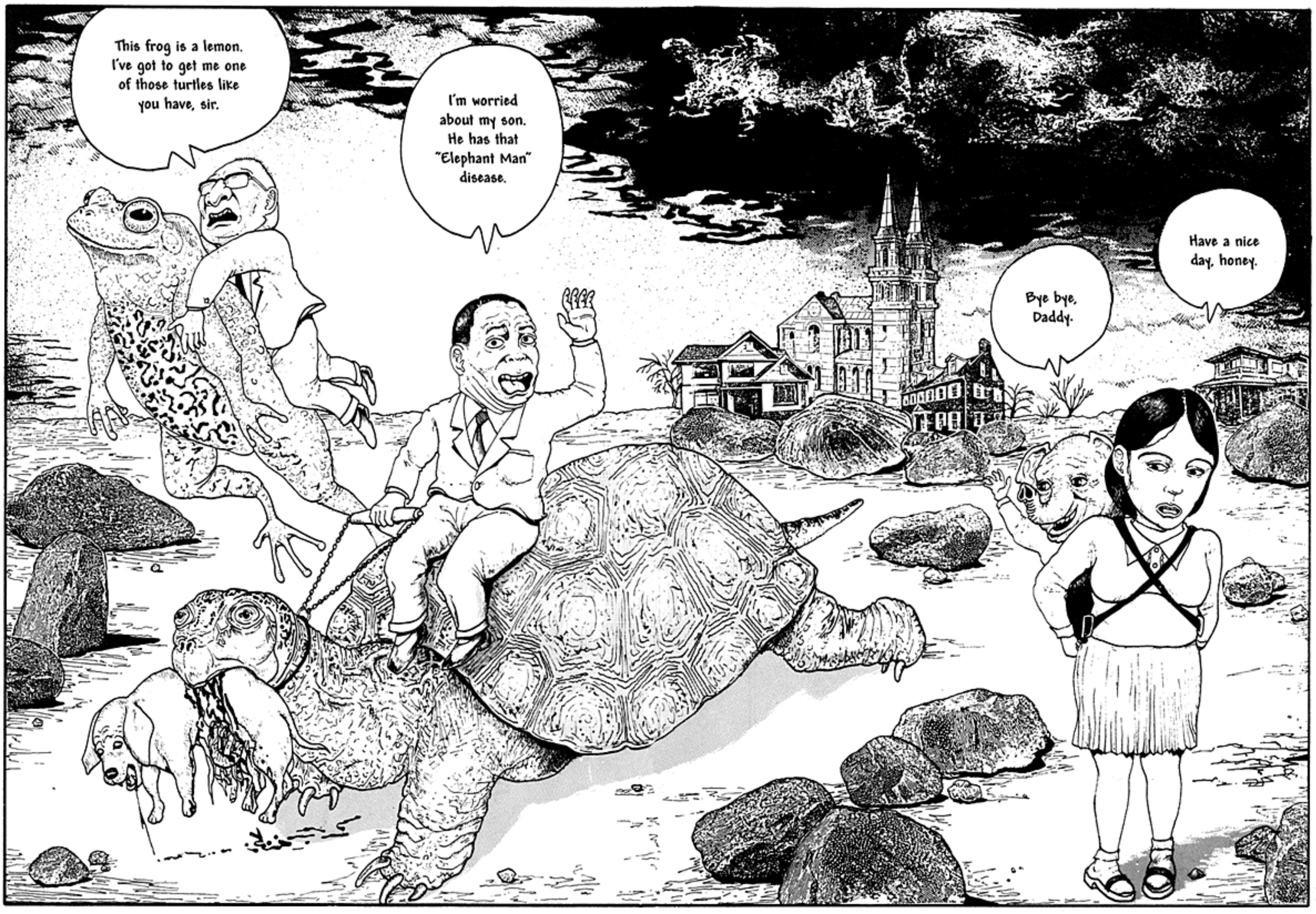
超大型四齣漫画

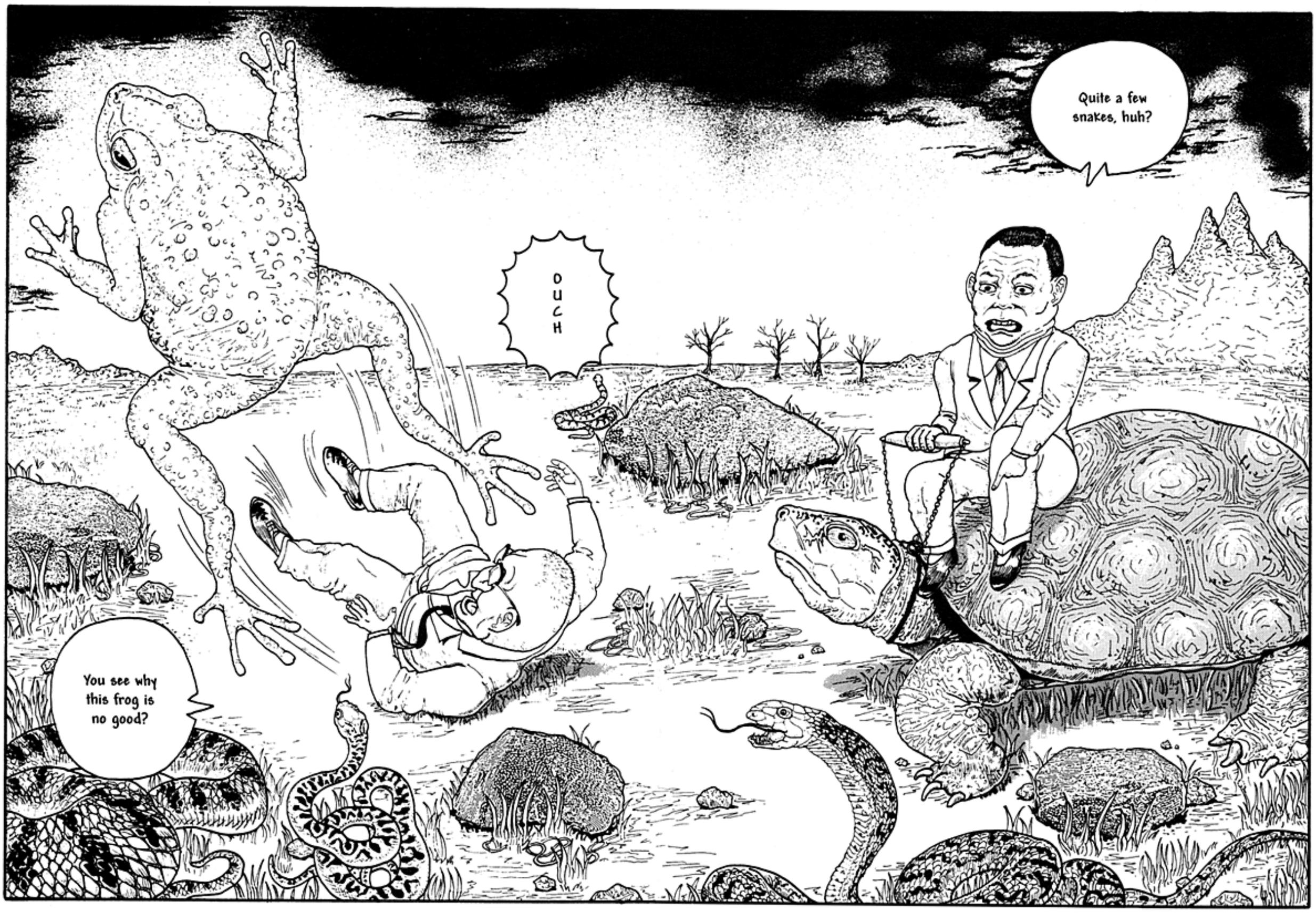
Bigger and Better

MUDDY WEHARA

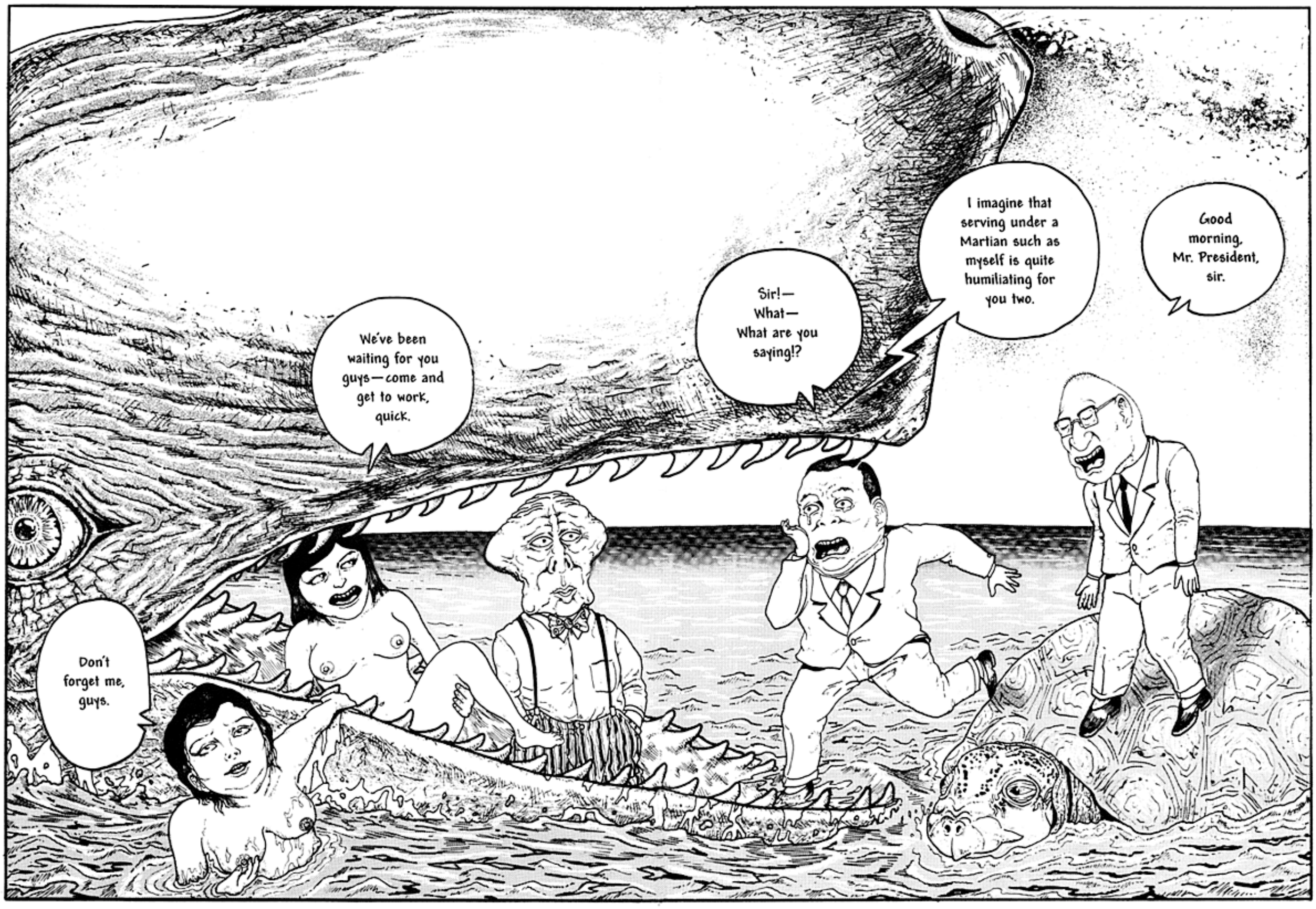
ULTRA-LARGE FOUR-FRAME MANGA, PART ONE

マディ・上原


This frog is a lemon. I've got to get me one of those turtles like you have, sir.
I'm worried about my son. He has that "Elephant Man" disease.
Bye bye, Daddy.
Have a nice day, honey.

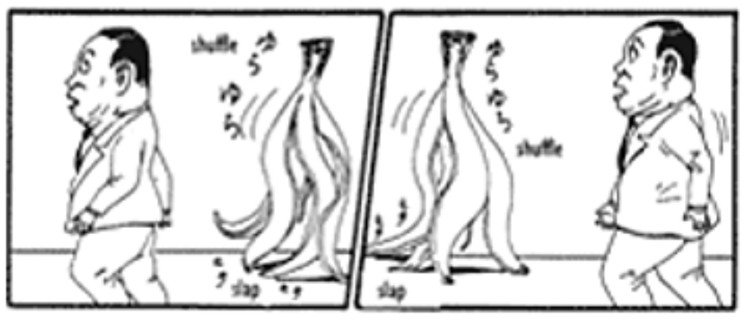

Quite a few snakes, huh?
DUCH
You see why this frog is no good?

Pardon me, sir.
Don't mention it. The office is just up ahead.

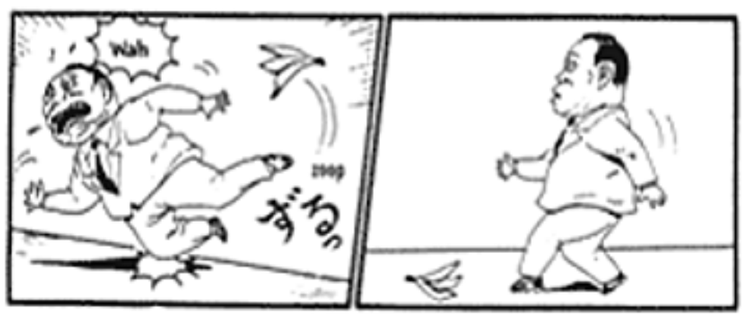

We've been waiting for you guys—come and get to work, quick.
Sir!— What— What are you saying!?
I imagine that serving under a Martian such as myself is quite humiliating for you two.
Good morning, Mr. President, sir.
Don't forget me, guys.

Banana

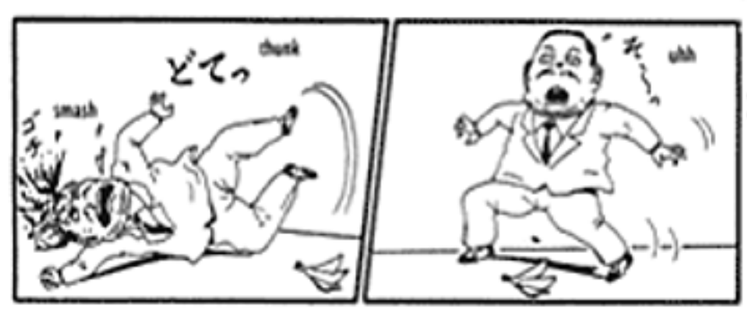
◆1



Passing a banana peel
on the street.

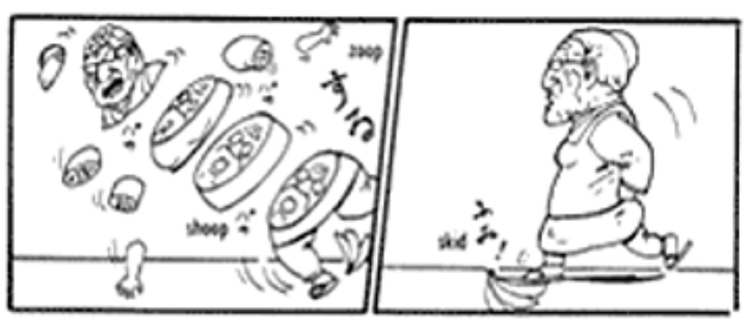


Avoiding a banana peel and
falling down anyway.



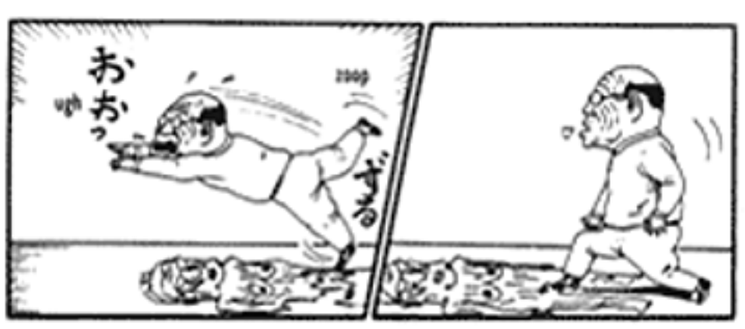
Stepping on a banana peel
and falling down.

◆4



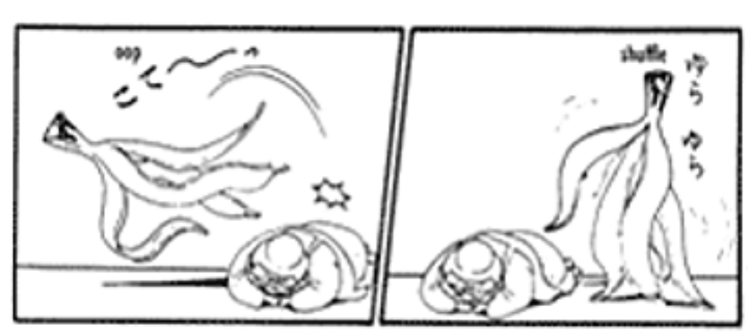
Old woman whose body when sliced reveals
an old man slips on a banana peel.

◆3



Old man slips
on an old woman peel.

◆2



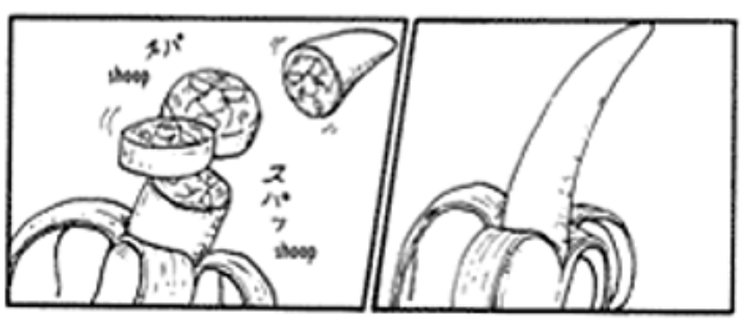
Banana peel slips
on an old woman.

Slice an old man anywhere,
reveal bananas.

Old woman peels banana—
eats peel.

Peel a banana and
out comes an old woman.

Old man and old woman pass
each other on the street.

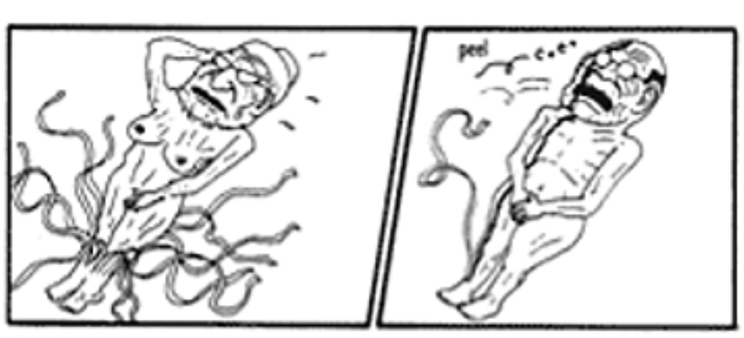


Wherever banana is sliced
an old woman is revealed.

Peel an old woman and
out comes a banana.

Old man and old woman in
ménage à trois with banana peel.

Wherever old woman is sliced
an old man is revealed.



Peel an old man and
out comes an old woman.

BIGGER and BETTER

超大型四齣漫画

Bigger and Better

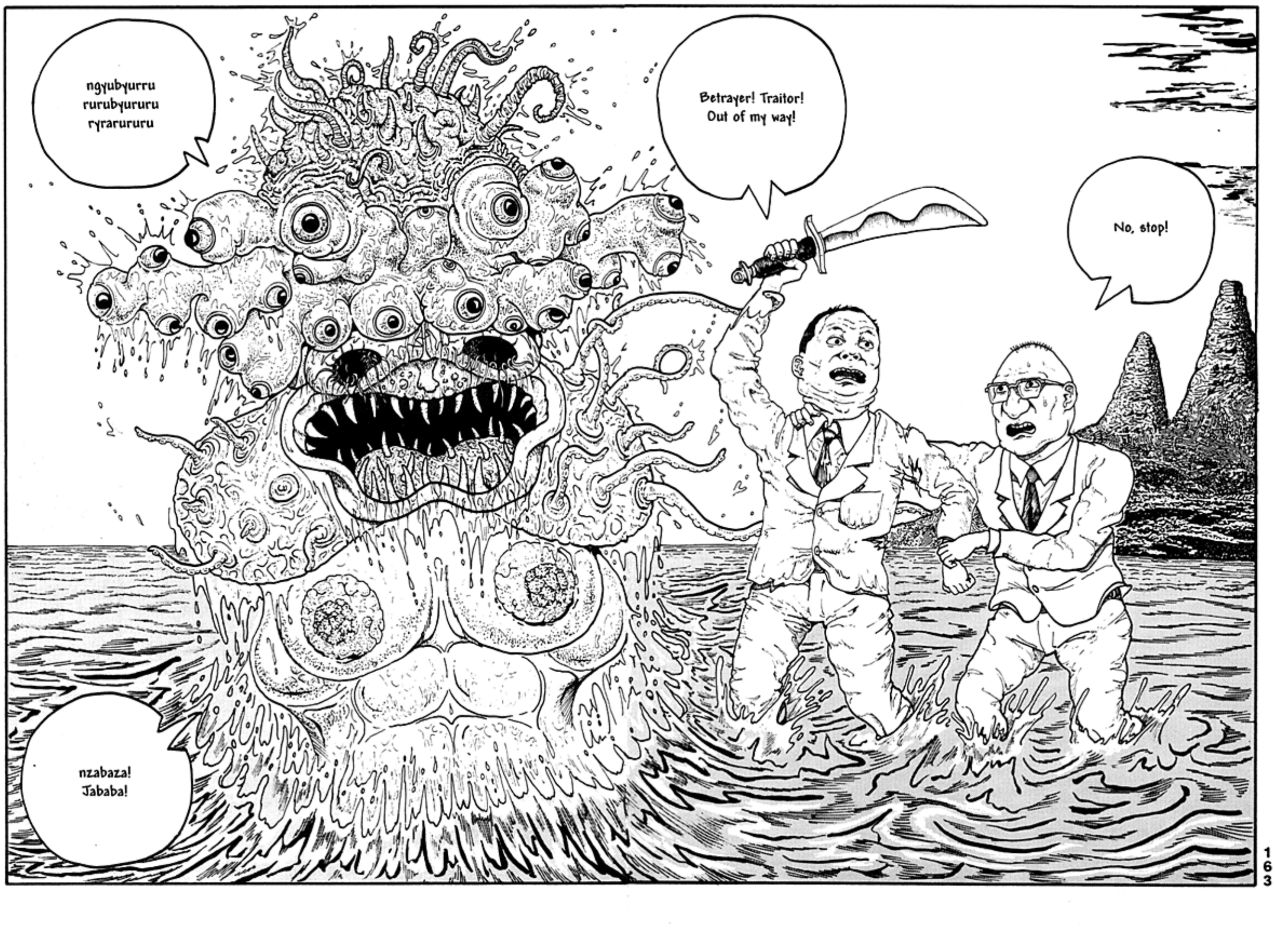
MUDDY WEHARA

ULTRA-LARGE FOUR-FRAME MANGA, PART TWO

マディ・上原

It's not only work— owing to unavoidable circumstances, this is something I HAVE to do.
Chief Director, sir—even if this is, as you say, work-related, I don't see how you could—

Here it comes—
infernal begetter
of original sin!
It's impossible—
Aruugh!!
This, this smell!
gurgle
gurgle
bubble
gurgle
bubble
gurgle


ngyubyurru
rurubyururu
ryrarururu
Betrayer! Traitor!
Out of my way!
No, stop!
nzabaza!
Jababa!

I can just imagine the look of joy on my wife's face! Bwa-ha-ha-ha!

Lookit all this loot!

Please forgive my cowardice.

Daddy!

Darling!

splish splash

END

Laughing Ball

HIDESHI HINO

黒魔団大サーカス

BLACK MAGIC TROOP
BIG TOP CIRCUS

We live surrounded by the circus show booths that conceal us; no human beings ever enter our home—that black tent, that is where we live.

We are the Black Magic Troop of the Big Top Circus—we live in the shadows, among the spirits of darkness.

yay!

yay!

The world of darkness we live in is on the verge of extinction.

BLACK MAGIC TROOP

黒魔団大サーカス

BIG TOP CIRCUS

入口

But then human beings came along and began to take control over this world

魔術館

怪奇ハウス

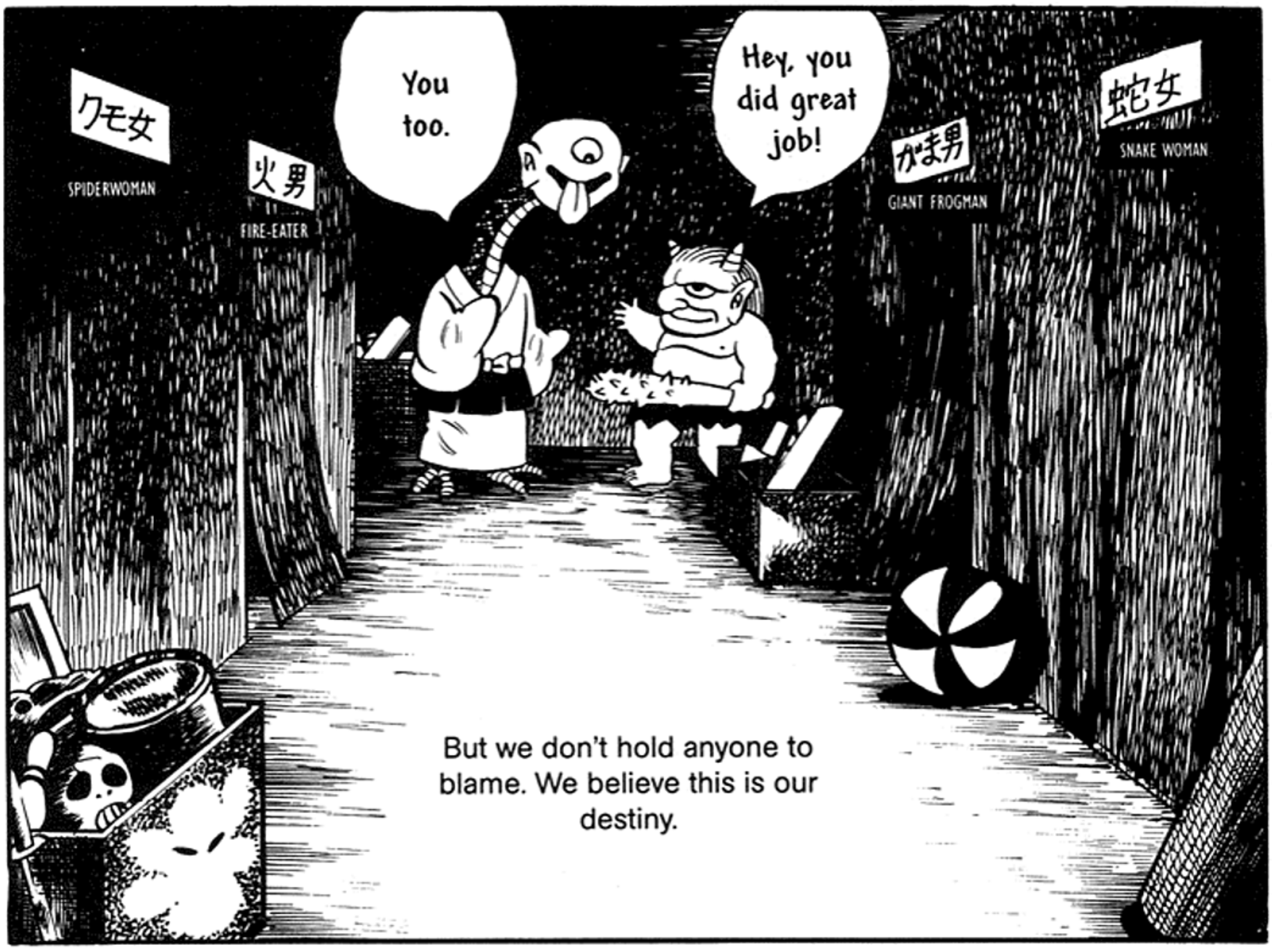
A long time ago the spirits who lived in this dark world were prosperous.

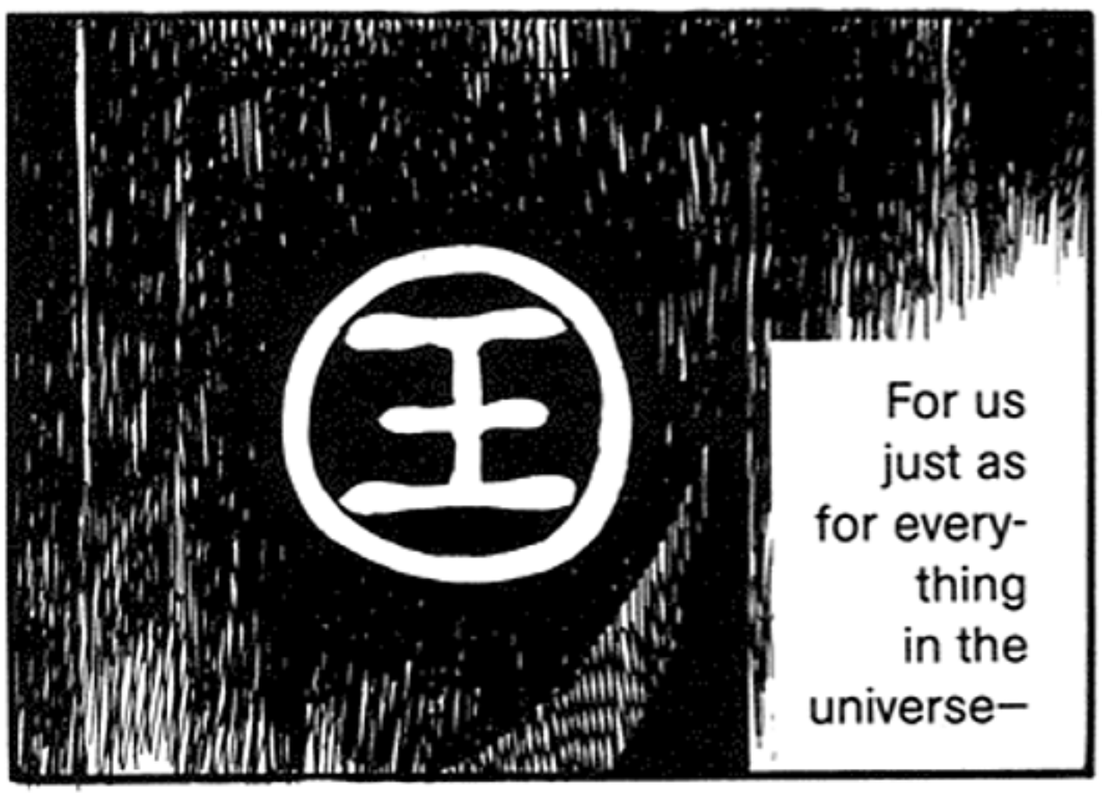
and thus began our history of persecution and our downfall.

恐怖ノ演芸場

妖怪ノ国

へびせんべい


クモ女
SPIDERWOMAN
火男
FIRE-EATER
You too.
Hey, you did great job!
がま男
GIANT FROGMAN
蛇女
SNAKE WOMAN
But we don't hold anyone to blame. We believe this is our destiny.


王
For us just as for every-thing in the universe–

王
Everything in the universe is constantly drifting. Ahh . . . ! Five thousand years have passed since our heyday!

all we can do is drift, that's all . . .

I am the eldest member of the tribe of the world of spirits.

I'm the Wizard of the Spirit World.

Without further ado, here are those makers of mirth—the clowns!!

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Thank you for your patience!

Ladies and gentlemen, I present Laughing Ball and his pals!!

clap clap clap

dat dat dat tah

pii pii

WOW!!

dap dap

TEHEHEHEHE HEHEHEHE HEHEHE

TE . . . HEHE HEHE

saah saah

clap clap

yay

piiiih

Yeah . . . he doesn't just make the audience laugh.

Hey, Laughing Ball is popular as ever. He does have an enigmatic power, doesn't he . . .

he's the only thing that saves us from a tragic fate.

When I think about it, it seems to me that

Whenever we see him, we can't stop laughing. He really makes us crack up.

He makes us laugh too.

yay

clap clap clap

ha ha ha ha

piiiii

mumble mumble mumble

What's going on?

Oh my god!

黒魔団大サーカス

Don't do such a foolish thing! This is the only way we can survive!!

Get away from me! I'm not crazy! I can't take this fake circus life anymore!!

But, Wizard, we are the spirit world tribe. I don't want to do pitiful freak shows for human beings anymore!!

peep

hahaha . . . haha hahahahaha

Laughing Ball!!

ga bonk ga bonk

peep

peep

peep

That was great!!

Laughing Ball!!

snnatch

Ah !

Always laugh ... hahaha hahaha haha

Just laugh ...

What the hell are you up to, Laughing Ball!

poke

haha haha ...

Isn't it nice?

Everybody here is carrying a burden!

You're not the only one who suffers and has a hard time!

Yeah, he's right. I agree with Laughing Ball!!

.....

peep
peep
peep

Your smile gives me the courage to go on.

Ok

hahahaha
hahaha
haha
hahahaha
hahaha!!!

ga bonk ga bonk

Thanks, Laughing Ball . . .

hahaha
haha
hihihihi
hihi

Haha haha. He is a happy little guy.

ha ha
ha ha

ho
ho ho

Oh, yes . . . Laughing Ball is a born clown.

haaaaaa
haha
haha
haha

Bouncing all around in the black tent,

Living in the black tent, it's not hard to sink into despair over our harsh fate.

hahaha
haha
hahahaha
hahahaha

Laughing Ball makes everybody feel good— he is truly a treasure to us.

Hahahahaha, with him around we never get bored.

Bwuah hahaha haha!!

Hahaha, Laughing Ball is a real son of a gun . . .

Although Laughing Ball is so childlike, he has a cute little kid of his own.

wiggle squirm

もぞ もぞ

who can do nothing more than laugh innocently.

Laughing Ball is a childlike freak

Everyone calls him Kid.

Hey, Kid . . .

Hmmm. No, I haven't seen him.

Do you know where my kid is . . . ?

Where are you?

There you are!!

Oh!

Hey, Kid, where are you?!?

Haha ha

The Spider-lady gave me some honey.

Hey, Kid, what are you doing here?

Slurp

flutter

fwap

Now I'm full. Let's go home.

snuggle snuggle

もぐ もぐ

ヒ°ヲ

plop

Fufufu

I'm not gonna give him to anybody.

No way. he's my kid!

You have such a cute kid. Won't you give him to me?

Laughing Ball, you are lucky.

Hahahaha. I'm only teasing.

No way! No way!!

What happened!?

What?!

Ahhh! Help! Come here!

One day, a horrible thing happened.

What are you saying!!

What!!

He went outside to suck honey, but he got stung by a wasp!!

The kid is dead!!

Kid . . .

Wuuu uuuh!

Wuuuu uuh!!

Poor Kid!!

Oh wuh

Oh no . . .

!?

So don't cry, folks. Laugh. Always laugh. Hahahahahahaha

My kid's still smiling even though he's dead.

zoop

Laugh . . . always laugh . . . Hahahahahaha hahaha

You could cry at least for today.

You don't have to laugh.

Laughing Ball, you . . .

!?

!?

Hahahaha hahaha hahaha hahhhh

Hahahaha hahaha hahahaha hahhhh

Poor Laughing Ball . . .

Hahahaha
ahahahaha
hahahaha
hahahahha

Even after such a tragedy, Laughing Ball could do nothing but laugh.

Hahahaha
hahaha
hahhaha
hahha

It's only been ten days and he's laughing like nothing happened!

Damn it! What's with him!?

Hahahahaha
hahahaha
hahahaha
hahahahha

Doesn't he feel sad after losing his kid?

.....

Hey Laughing Ball!! There's something we've been wanting to ask you for some time—

Stop it!

Don't you have any feelings as a parent?!

Do you even have a heart!?

.....

Laughing Ball doesn't have feelings such as sadness, suffering, or agony to begin with. He can't do anything but laugh, can't you see?!

Don't bother trying to change. You're better off your way . . . that's just how it is.

Ah, it's you, Laughing Ball!

Good morning!!

Morn-ing.

tweet tweet

.....

Damn it!!

Let's get out of here!

You, you ...I don't want to see your face!!

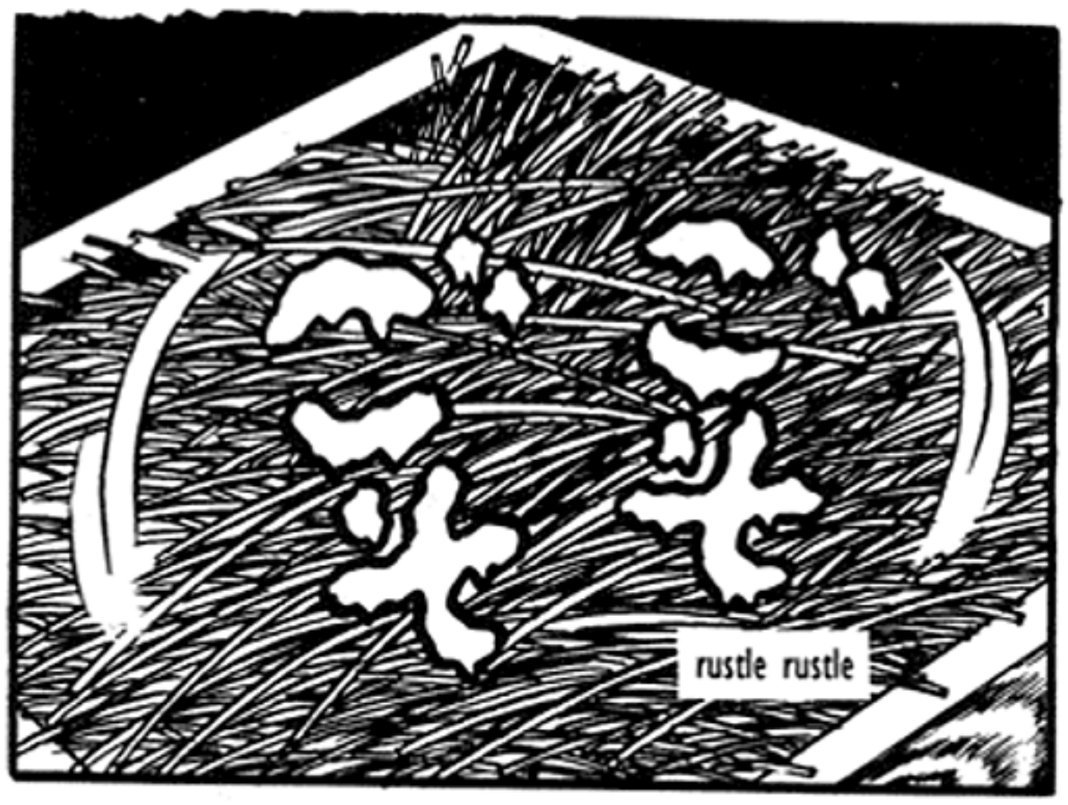
笑いころがし

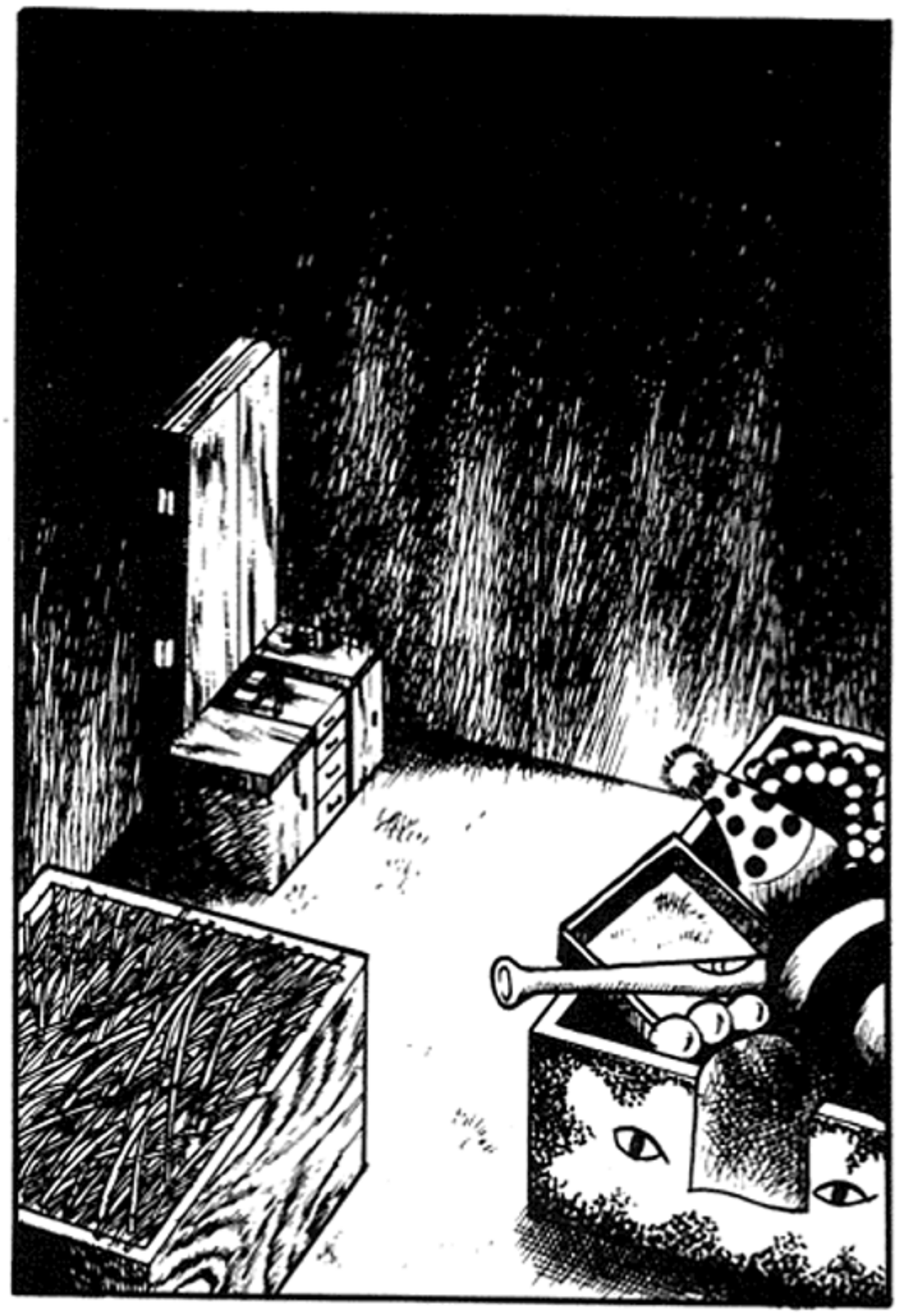
.....

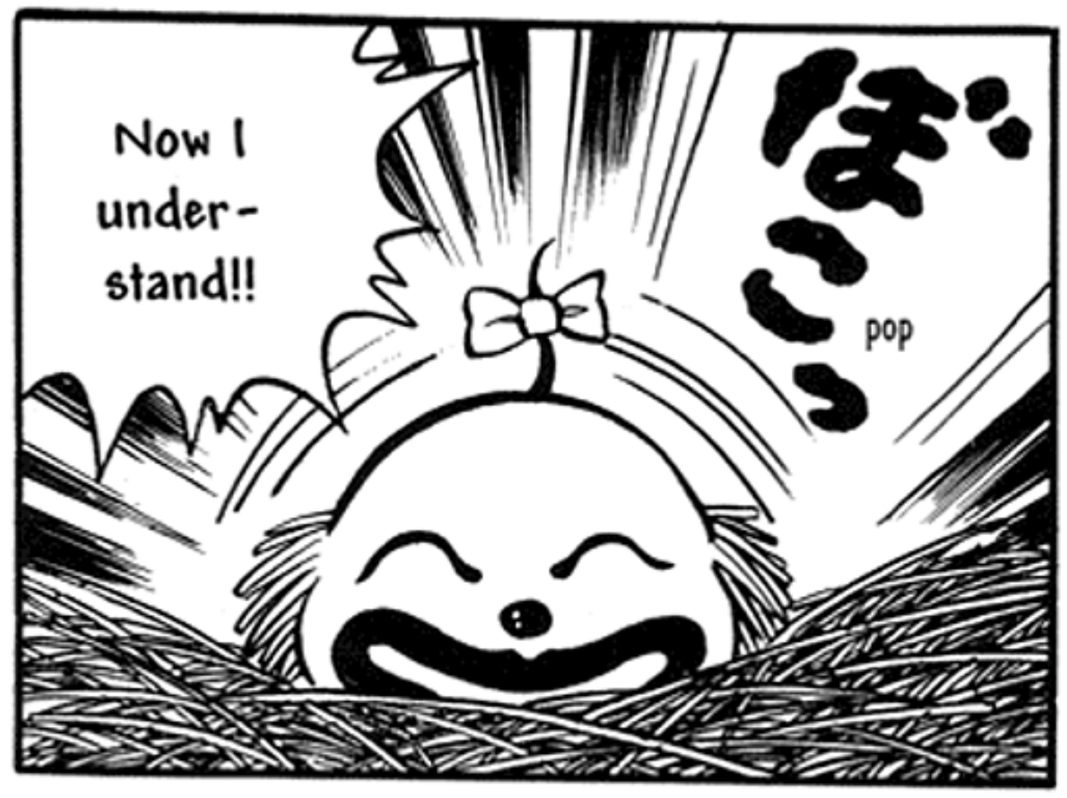
笑いころがし

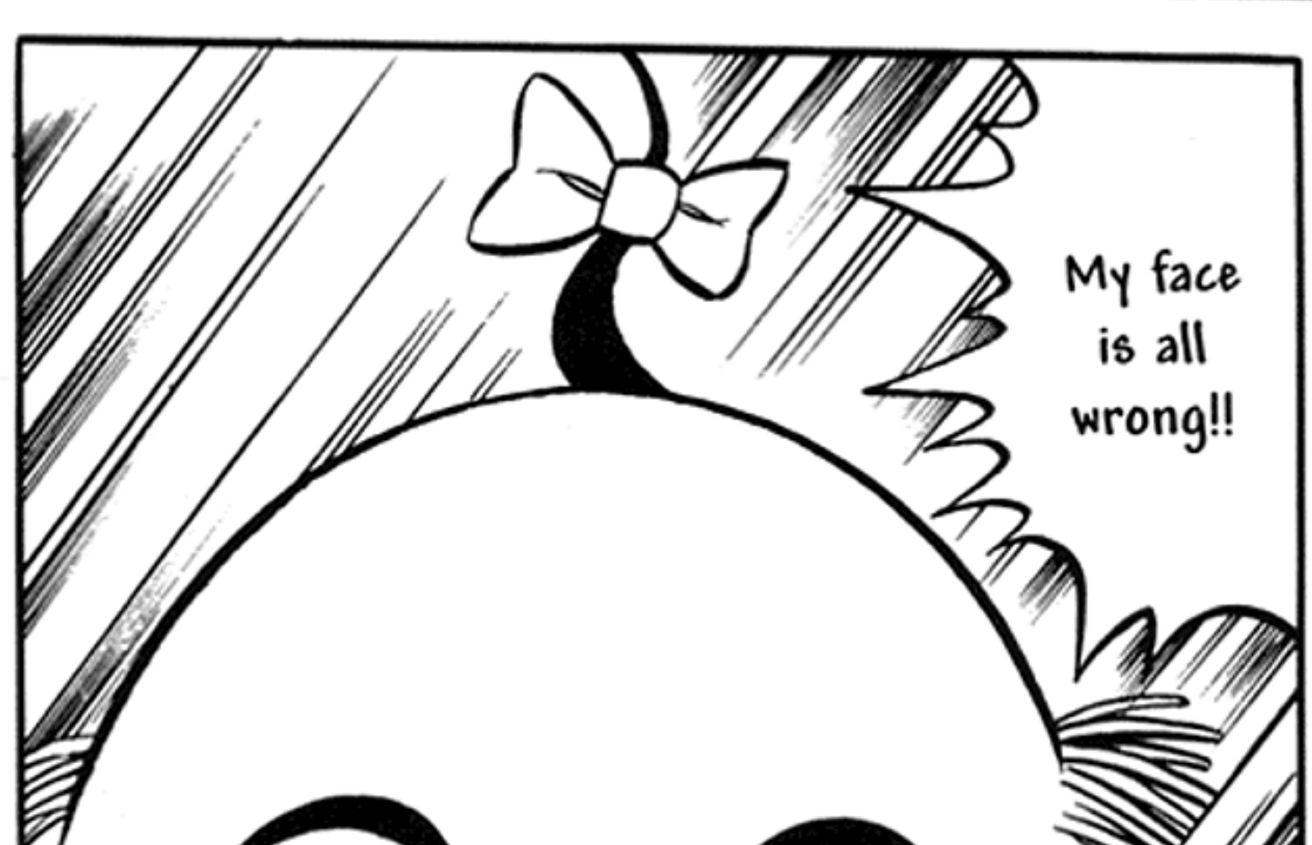
LAUGHING BALL

ssshh

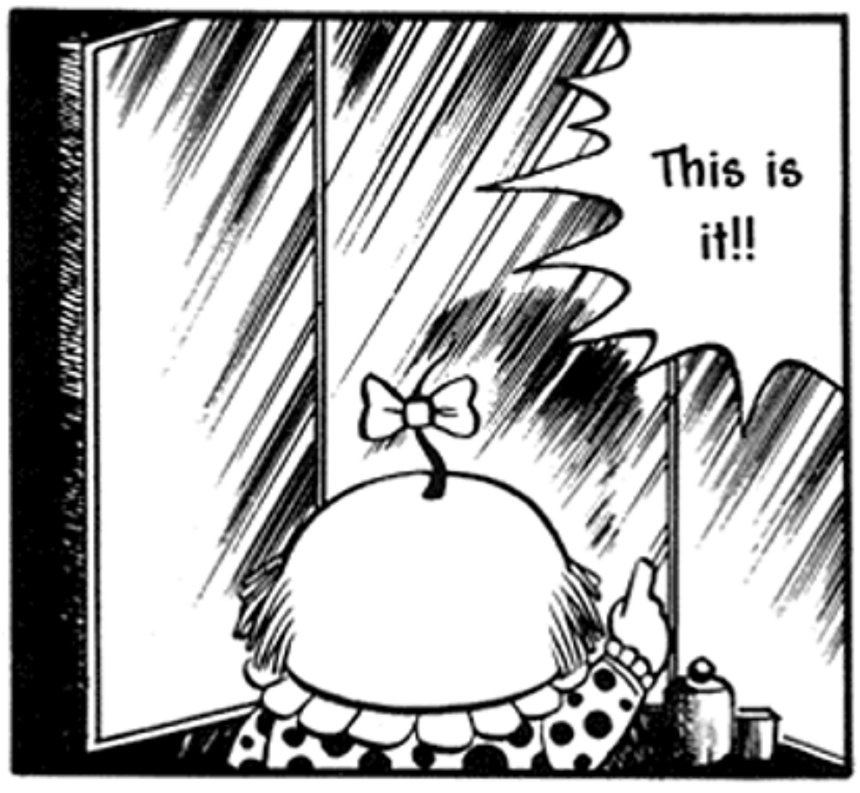

rustle rustle




Now I under-stand!!
ぽこっ
pop


My face is all wrong!!

creak


This is it!!

My kid has died, and I still have this happy face ...

grrp

grrp

grrb

grrb

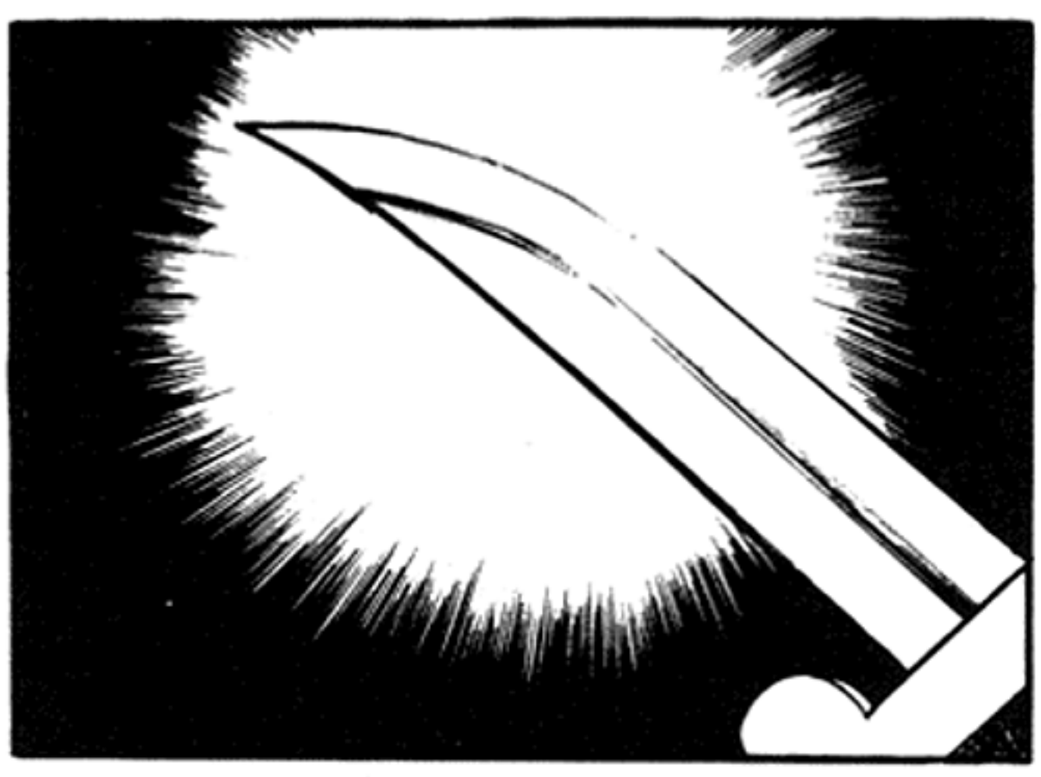
In the end I'm stuck with this smiling face.

No matter what I try, nothing works ...

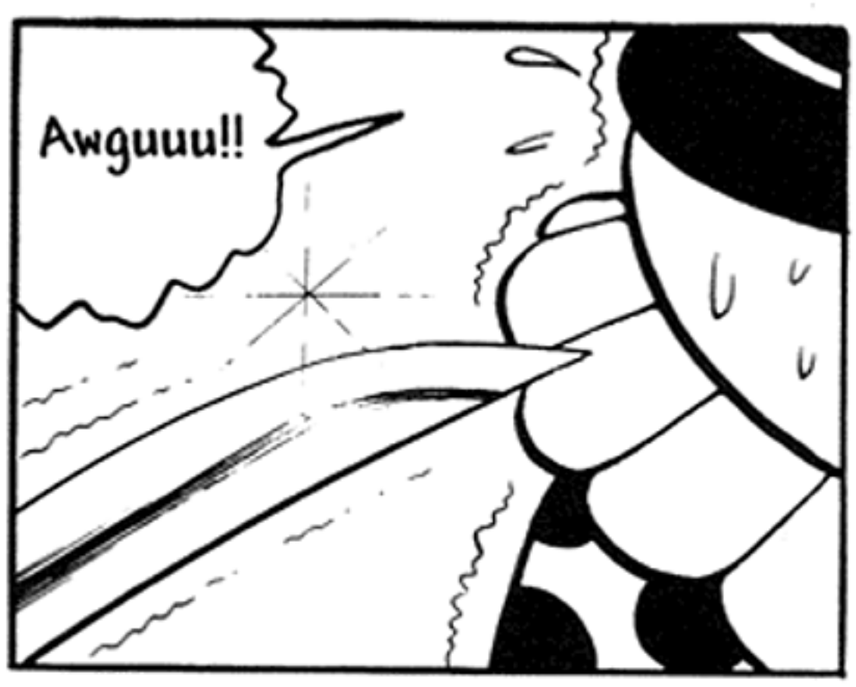
pppull

pppull

This face . . . if only I didn't have this face. Everybody would like me again!!



tssrip
Wughhhhhhh!!


Awguuu!!

goosh

brripp

brripp

tonk

grrip

WUGYAAAAA!!!

笑いころがし

LAUGHING BALL

What's happening!?

What's going on!?

耳なしホー

HY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

!!

mumble mumble mumble

ガ ガ ガ
ヤ ヤ

It's Laughing Ball!!!!

鉄面皮

Who's crying like that!?

What??

ゴルト

Oh, Wizard!!!

王

La ... Laughing Ball!!

Well, it can't get any worse than this.

Hey, hey look at me! Don't you see my face is crying?!

His innocence and everyone's cruelty has driven him to this extreme.

Oh no!!!!

Hahahaha
haha . . .
hahahahah

twitch

twitch

Hahaha
hahaha
hahaha
hahaha

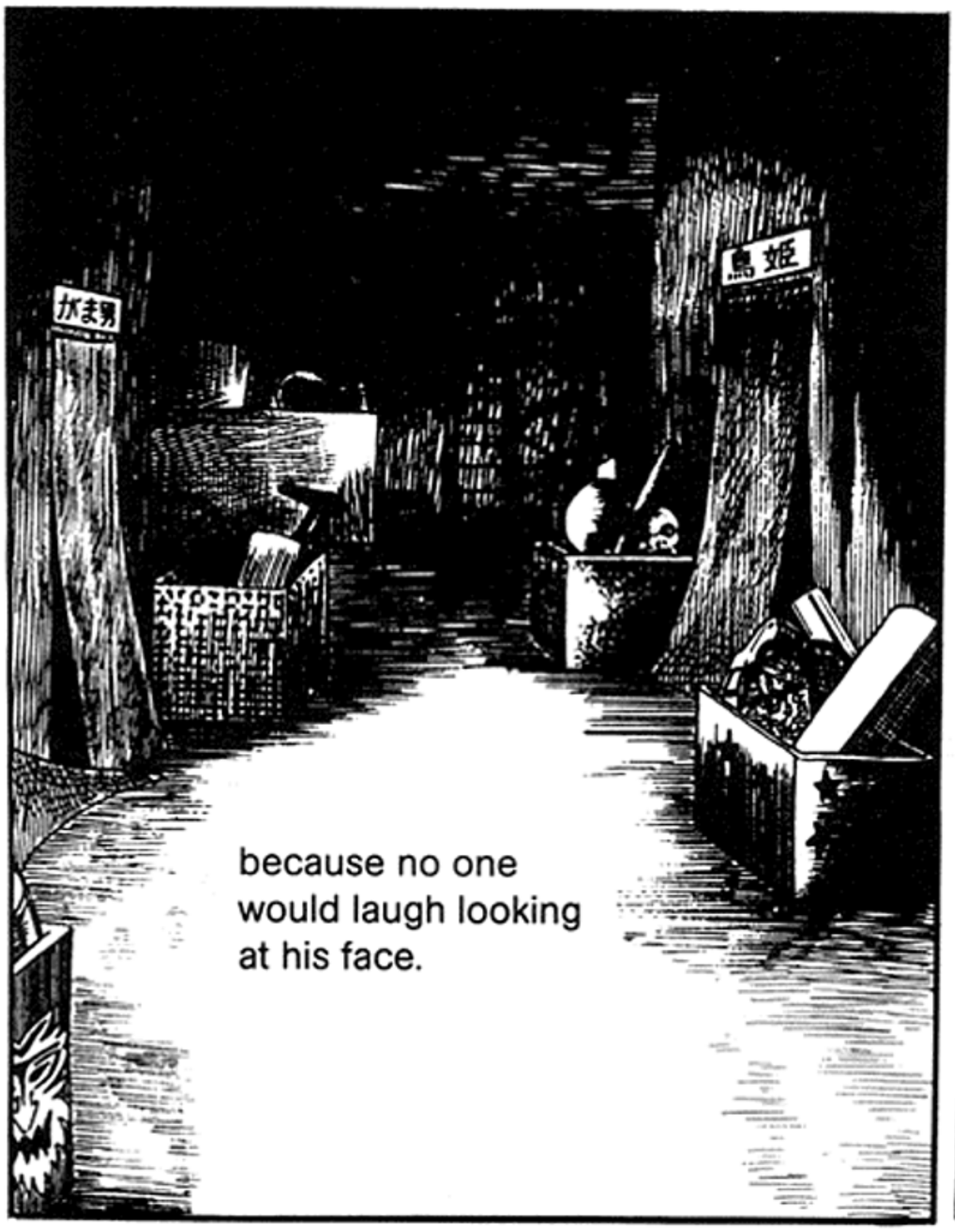
Laughing Ball!!

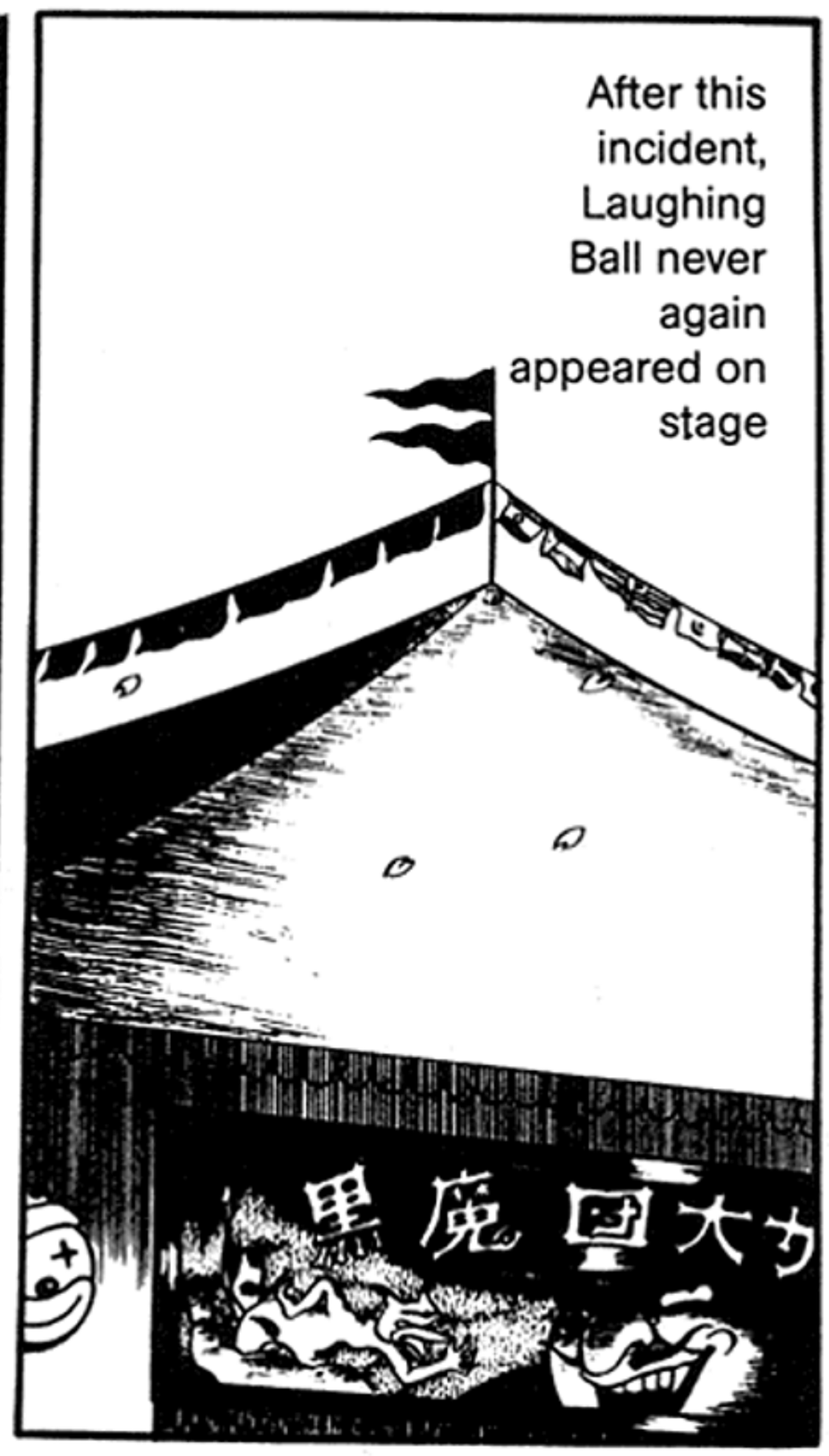
Laughing Ball, forgive us!!

And still, he can only laugh . . . poor Laughing Ball.

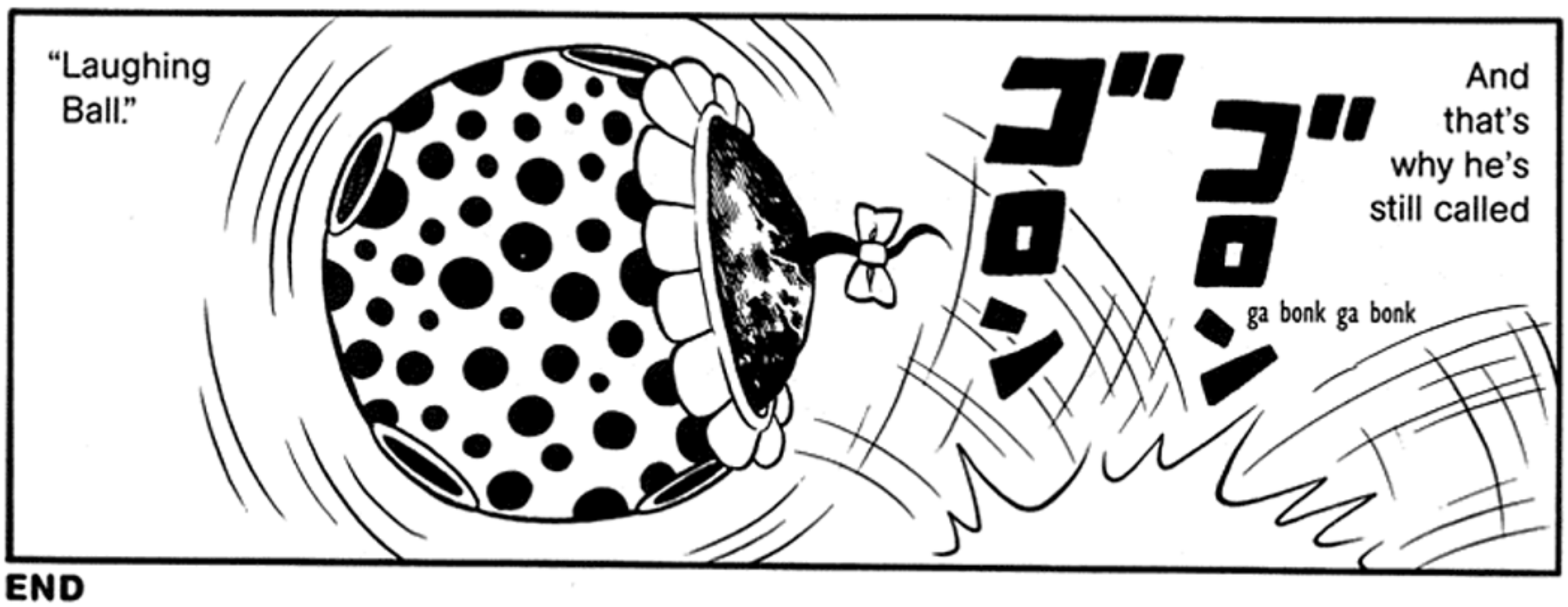
WUGHHHH!
WUUUUU . . .

waah


かま男
島姫
because no one
would laugh looking
at his face.


After this
incident,
Laughing
Ball never
again
appeared on
stage
黒鹿団大力

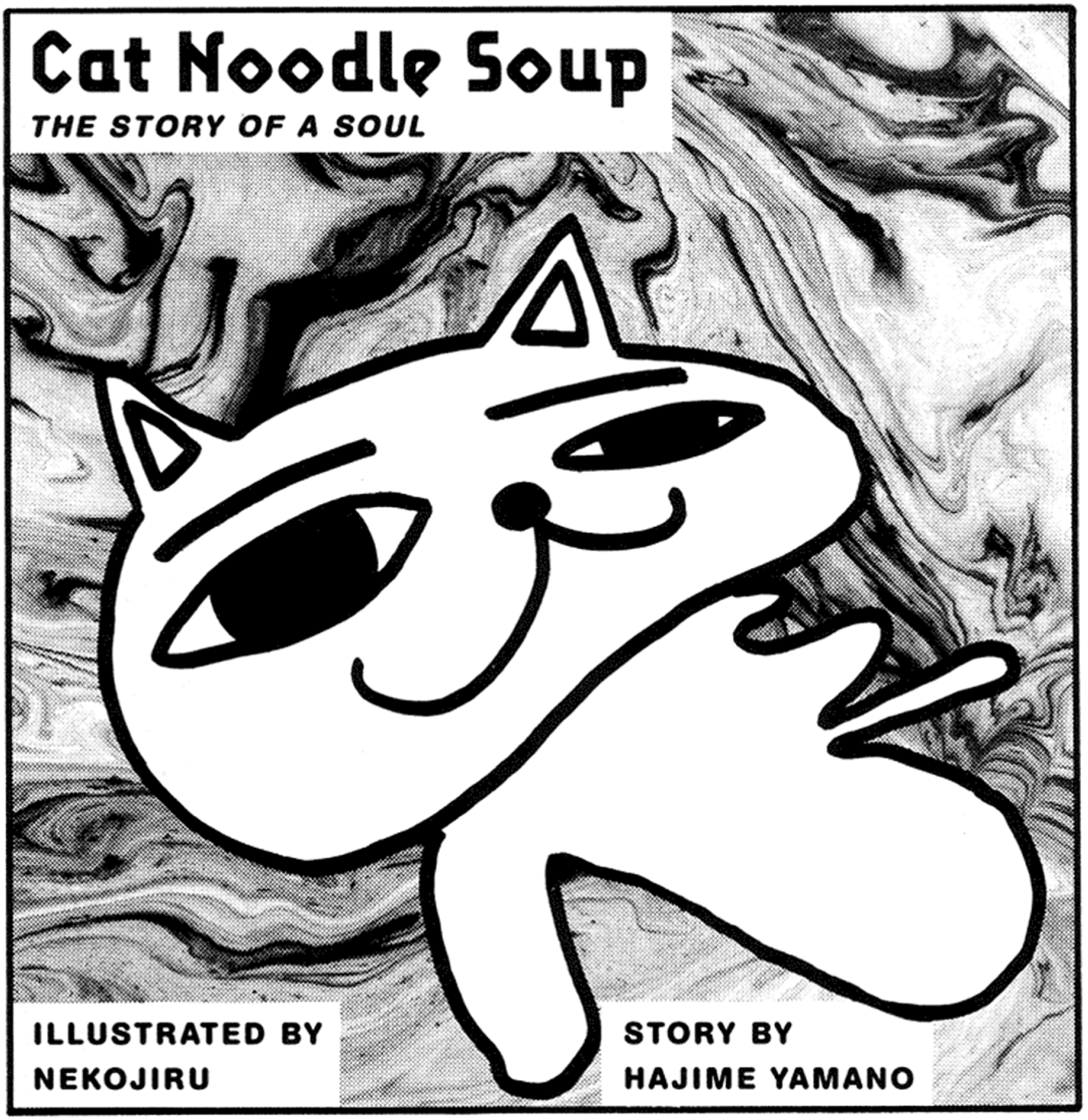
Hahaha
hahaha
But he goes on
laughing and bouncing
around inside their
tent as usual.
ゴロン
ゴロン
ga bonk
ga bonk


"Laughing
Ball."
ゴロン
ゴロン
And
that's
why he's
still called
ga bonk ga bonk

END

Cat Noodle Soup

THE STORY OF A SOUL



ILLUSTRATED BY
NEKOJIRU

STORY BY
HAJIME YAMANO

はっ はっ
pant
pant

How strange– I'm speaking but nothing's coming out.

Mommy, I'm thirsty.

はっ はっ
pant
pant

Uhhh, the room is spinning.

I feel sick.

Kitty-cat . . .

ちりーん

ding

Who is this strange character?

Have some water.

But I can't stand up.

Come here and take the water.

I cast a spell, so it's ok now.

?!

Thanks.

Here, it's nice and cool.

Wow, you're right!

zoop

すぅ

Umm, that's good!

ちーん

ding

ゴゴゴゴ

gulp gulp

What's going on?

How can I be over here drinking water when I'm over there sleeping?

What wonderful place?

ぎゅ

squeeze

Come with me now to a wonderful place.

It's nothing to worry about.

Hmmm, well, ok.

A place where kitty-cat has never been.

I'm all better now, Mommy. I'm going to go out and play with this boy.

Yes indeed.

Are there lots of good things in the wonderful place?

Huh? It seems like she can't hear me.

ぶつだん
RELIGIOUS SUPPLIES
やおや
VEGETABLE MARKET
とこや
BARBER
うどん
RAMEN

Whatever your heart desires, you need only imagine it, and it will appear before your very eyes.

But soon I think you won't want anything at all.

Now, that's strange.

PANCAKES
もんじゃ
まほうや
MAGIC SHOP
ぬのや
SEWING MACHINES
とうふ
TOFU

You needn't worry about any such thing.

No one will scold you.

I'll get scolded.

I don't wanna go anymore. It's supper time.

Daddy, give me a ride.

ぎーーーん
whoosh whoosh

It's Daddy!

BIKE SHOP
自転車
ぎーーーん
whoosh whoosh

ぎー
ぎー
whoosh
whoosh
ぎー
ぎー
whoosh
whoosh
Daddy!
Daddy!
ぎーこん
ぎーこん
whoosh
whoosh
DRIED SARDINES
いわし
I'm invisible to Daddy!
He didn't see me.
I don't know what to do.
Something weird is going on.

ぴょん

bonk

mew
mew

どん
どん

thunk thunk

DRIED SARDINES

He can see me!

mew

It's my brother!

にゃー

mew

Come, kitty-cat, it's time to go.

NO!

HSSSSSS!!

?

Oh, no—
Oh, no—
This strange
spell—
It's melting
my memory!

Pull me! Pull harder!
Harder!

MEW!

My mind is becoming blanker and blanker.

MEW!

uh—

streeetch

wham

rrripp

207

I would have taken her to heaven.

Damn—that kid got the other half!

……

うどん
RAMEN

mew

ソロバン
ABACUS

だーー
dash

きーーん
whoosh whoosh
きーーん

かなもの
HARDWARE

mew

mew

Now I have no choice but to see she is reincarnated as a plant.

くすり
DRUG STORE

パイプオルガン教室
PIPE ORGAN LESSONS

ぴょーん
poing

ずさっ
zoot

ぎゅーん
ぎゅーん

whoosh
whoosh

Daddy!
hurry, hurry!
It's kitty-cat!
Kitty-cat is—

とととと

trot
trot

It's too late.
She's gone.
I'm very sorry.

ぴゃろ。

zzzoop

Why, she . . .
She's back!

Wha—???

ぱち

blink

?

ぼー

duh

My beautiful girl—
You're alive!

ぼーう

duh

I wonder if she will be this stupid forever.

ぼ" duh

ぼ"

duh

A few months passed . . .

and then one day—

きょり きょり きょり

squeek squeek squeek

Good lord! She's peeing!

!

きょり

squeek

pssss

ボー
whish
mew!
じー
hmmm
きょり
きょり
きょり
squeek squeek squeek
ガブ
snap
mew
mew
きょりきょりきょり
squeek squeek
squeek

ppzzz

swip

shtonk

Hello,
little brother!

mew

You found
my other
half!

おしまい
END

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

YOSHIKAZU EBISU Born in Nagasaki in 1947, as a child, Ebisu drew manga under the influence of Osamu Tezuka, and Mitsuteru Yokoyama's *Tetsujin 28 Go* (known, in its animated form, to American boys and girls of the 1960s as *Gigantor*). In the late fifties Ebisu discovered the newly emerging gekiga and was immediately smitten. "My preference changed," he remembers, "from gigantic robots to realistic stories about people." And yet he credits American action movies, especially John Wayne's *The Alamo* with giving him a taste for inventing ever more unique and grizzly methods for killing people. Ebisu's work first appeared in *Garo* in 1973, at the tail end of underground manga's first golden age, and his darkly menacing, surreal comedies have been a mainstay ever since. Though revered by younger artists and manga fans alike, in the past seven years Ebisu has become more widely known as a television star. Though his ingratiatingly comic character is instantly recognizable on the streets of Japan (he is affectionately known as "Warau Akuma" ["The Laughing Devil"]), ironically the fans of his TV personality are largely unaware of his celebrated contributions to the art of manga.

MASAKAZU TOMA remembers seeing his first issue of *Garo* in the seventh grade. It was a special edition devoted to legendary master of the grotesque, Shigeru Mizuki. Toma's encounters with *Garo* following that experience were rare and unexpected, but Mizuki's unique flavor stayed with him. The influence is clearly evident in Toma's own eerily atmospheric work. Toma debuted in *Garo*'s October 1982 issue with a story called "Gu no Koccho" ("The Height of Stupidity"). He went on to publish eleven manga stories in *Garo* during the 1980s. In 1987 Toma abandoned comics to, as he put it, "retire to the home of my soul." He returned in 1991 to publish four more pieces (one of which is this present volume's "Steel Pipe Melancholia"), and then once again dropped out of sight. He has not been heard from since. As of 1993, he was reported to be living somewhere in Osaka, but efforts to contact him have so far been unsuccessful.

TAKASHI NEMOTO was born in a Tokyo suburb in 1958 and has been drawing since childhood. His themes and obsessions seem to have remained remarkably consistent: one of his first manga stories from about the third grade showed Emperor Hirohito getting beaten up at the public baths and in the end being forced to shit in his pants. Bored and uninspired by the current popular manga that was all around him—and unaware of the innovations taking place in the underground—Nemoto quit drawing at age thirteen. It took the chance discovery of Terry Johnson's "Jonetsu no Penguin Gohan" in the late seventies to rekindle his enthusiasm for manga. He has since taken to the medium with a vengeance. Since his first published piece in 1980, Nemoto has become one of the underground art world's most prolific stars, producing a small library of novel-sized compilations of his work for *Garo,* as well as designing CD jackets and regularly contributing drawings and single-page strips to some of Japan's slicker music and pop-culture magazines. Nemoto has also brought his outsider's vision to the exploration of other art forms: he has published a collection of his collage work, plays in a Tokyo "noise" band, and hosts his own cable-access TV show, "Funky Tomatoes." And, along with cultural critic Manabu Yuasa, he has coauthored two volumes of *Deep Korea,* a landmark study of South Korean street culture.

EMIKO (CAROL) SHIMODA For most of the 1980s Emiko Shimoda was one of Japan's most popular and successful illustrators. Her portraits of both famous and obscure Japanese (Shimoda's people are always smiling) were regularly featured in magazines and advertising. Her work crosses all boundaries, achieving a style that is both ironic and celebratory, pleasant yet formally thrilling. For her comics work, Shimoda adopted a style parodying girls' romance manga of the 1960s. On the surface as charming as her portraits, Shimoda's manga is, however, even more double-edged. She delights in dropping shocking and incongruous elements into the confines of the popular romance aesthetic. In 1985, at the height of her fame, Shimoda picked up and moved to the United States, where she got married and settled in Queens. She voluntarily abandoned art for a number of years and, along with her husband (himself a Burmese immigrant), ran a laundry in her Corona neighborhood, and then a Karaoke bar on Manhattan's Upper West Side. In 1994 she returned to drawing and painting, prolifically completing over two hundred portraits within the summer, this time of American subjects from all walks of life (still

smiling). She hopes to have a New York gallery exhibition of this recent work and envisions inviting all of her portrait subjects to the opening.

KAZUICHI HANAWA is one of Japan's most revered and imitated mangaka. His macabre, erotic tales of medieval aristocracy are, in their cruelly humorous depictions of late Heian-period decadence, reminiscent of the early fiction of Jun'ichiro Tanizaki. Hanawa was born April 17, 1947. He debuted as a mangaka in *Garo*'s July 1971 issue, and his work was an instant sensation. After the death of his mother in the early eighties, Hanawa quit drawing manga and retired to his hometown in rural Saitama. There he lived the life of a farmer while reading works on Buddhism, yoga, and psychology. He was lured back to manga in 1984 by the legendary editor Hiroshi Yaku to contribute a thirty-four page story for the debut issue of *Comic Baku*. Yaku remembers Hanawa at that time as a nervous man, whose morbid fear of meeting people bordered on paranoia. "If people around here knew I was a mangaka," he told Yaku, "they'd come and throw stones at me." Hanawa begins a manga without any preconceived plan as to the direction his story will take. He draws image upon image, holding the theme and plot together with only his enormous powers of concentration. He has published many collections of his work and has collaborated with Suehiro Maruo on a book of illustrations titled *Muzane* (*Cruel Pictures*). Hanawa, now living in Sapporo in Northern Japan, has lately found himself in serious legal trouble. The police recently raided his home, confiscating his collection of antique weaponry. Because of Japan's very strict gun laws, there is a strong possibility that Hanawa will have to serve time. In light of this, *Garo* has initiated a national letter-writing campaign to try to keep this essential artist from going to jail.

YASUJI TANIOKA is one of the most popular mangaka in Japan. His outrageous and crude "gag" manga appeals to people from all walks of life, and unlike most of his contemporaries, Tanioka fits comfortably in both the underground and mainstream worlds. At the height of his fame in the early seventies, Tanioka was drawing more than two hundred manga pages for forty different magazines every month. At that time, he not only recorded a 45-rpm record, "Yasuji no Ora-Ora Bushi" ("Yasuji's Ora Ora Song"), but was the star and subject of two films—a live-action movie and an animated cartoon, both entitled "Tanioka Yasuji no Mettametta Gaki-dou Koza" ("Yasuji Tanioka Lectures on the Rascal's Messy-Mess Road"). The

cartoon was distributed in the United States and actually did quite well. Tanioka was born August 29, 1943, in Ehime Prefecture. While he was still a child, his father, a thrift-shop owner and local politician, went bankrupt, and the family was forced to move to Tokyo. Unlike many of the artists featured in *Comics Underground Japan*, Tanioka was actively encouraged by his parents to pursue a career in manga. At age sixteen he debuted in a magazine targeted at elementary school students, where his comics were a regular feature for two years. He soon moved to the adult market and started publishing in major magazines in 1966. Reminiscent of the American cartoonist Bill Holman (of Smokey Stover fame), Tanioka has always employed a number of nonsensical catch-phrases in his manga, which have gone on to become vital parts of Japanese slang. The best known of these is "hana-ji bu." *Hana-ji* (literally "nose blood") is a visual device indicating sexual excitement, and *bu* is the sound of the spurting blood. There have been over sixty published volumes of Tanioka's collected manga, yet most of his work these days is in advertising.

SUEHIRO MARUO was born into a poor family on January 28, 1956, the youngest of seven brothers and sisters. An intensely private child, he claims not to have spoken more than a few words to his parents during his entire youth. He drew all the time as a boy and especially enjoyed tracing the popular action manga "Eightman." At age thirteen Maruo began regularly skipping school in order to catch the daily showing of the popular soap opera "Hyoten." He dropped out of school after junior high and was living on his own by the age of fifteen. His troubled ways proliferated, as he began shoplifting—at first art books and eventually almost anything. This behavior culminated in a two-week jail stay in the mid-seventies when he was caught stealing Pink Floyd and Santana albums from a local record shop. Maruo began drawing manga seriously at age nineteen. He brought his initial efforts to *Garo* but was perfunctorily rejected. At twenty-four he debuted as a mangaka in the pages of a porn magazine, the title of which he has since forgotten. Maruo describes his mature manga as a "collection of thefts" (Kazuichi Hanawa was a major influence), and he admits to lifting the idea for "Planet of the Jap" from Philip K. Dick's sci-fi classic *The Man in the High Castle*. Unlike many of the underground mangaka, Maruo is a supremely accomplished draftsman in the traditional mold, and he has gone out of his way to disassociate himself from the more self-consciously idiosyncratic aspects of *Garo*. He says that publishers think his work attracts the same audience as that of underground great Yoshiharu Tsuge, but that in reality his biggest fans are high-school

girls. He even professes a deep hatred for all modern art. But, then, what could be more modern than that? Maruo's *Mr. Arashi's Amazing Freak Show* is available in English translation from Blast Books.

HANAKO YAMADA was the pen name of Yumi Takaichi, born June 10, 1967. Her parents were fervent communists, and unlike most Japanese children, Takaichi was brought up without immersion in the Buddhist or Shinto religions. After she graduated from the Japan Design School, her work began appearing in a number of commercial magazines. In 1987, at the age of twenty, she was given the prestigious Young Magazine Tetsuya Chiba Award and was well on her way to a successful commercial career. After a tumultuous correspondence with Takashi Nemoto, she began, at his urging, to publish in *Garo,* while continuing her work in the commercial field. Her underground manga invariably deals with a young person unable to fit in. It is therefore telling that what attracted Takaichi to the name Hanako Yamada was its very commonness (the equivalent of "Mary Smith" in America). From the outset, her manga was marked by a desperate, misanthropic nihilism, filled with hallucination and fear. The frankly confessional nature of her work became sadly apparent when in 1993, after a brief stay in a mental institution, Hanako Yamada committed suicide.

PAN MIGIWA was born in 1964, "the same year," she says, "as *Garo.*" Following high school, she began drawing manga out of a sense of frustration, and as "a strange act of self-assertion." In 1985, while supporting herself as an artist's model, she won the *Garo* award for best newcomer. Since then, her subtle explorations into the human soul ("There is a lot of humor in the soul," she says. "God loves a joke."), featuring the little girl named Panko, have been one of the magazine's most popular features. Panko's adventures have so far been collected into two volumes. Concerning her own work, Migiwa writes, "Standing in front of me is a mountain of things—like homework—that I should have conquered when I was little. Since I felt that this homework wouldn't be so difficult if I took it one step at a time, I decided to start from the beginning and go back to childhood. And when I began to draw these things, a kid named Panko emerged. *Garo* is the only magazine that allows me to draw this kid. So, naturally for me, *Garo* is my gateway to conquering the mountain" (from *Garo Mandala*).

MUDDY WEHARA's introduction to comics was a hardbound collection of Popeye strips given to him by his grandfather. He has always been attracted to work outside of the mainstream and remembers being an enthusiastic follower of *Garo* and *Com* as far back as elementary school. In 1977 Muddy dropped out of college, where he had majored in French literature, and began to devote himself to manga. Forced at first to work a number of menial jobs to support himself–including newspaper delivery boy, waiter, and Coca Cola distributor–in 1981 Muddy became assistant to the popular mangaka Yasuji Tanioka. His break came a year later when he debuted in the adult weekly *Manga Sunday*. His early work, heavily influenced by the Punk aesthetic, was published in France and also appeared in American critic Greil Marcus's *Lipstick Traces.* With *Garo*'s serialization of Denno Saibane Kiddo–an outlandish mélange of weird biology and esoteric philosophy–in the early nineties Muddy sought to fulfill his ambition to create epic manga "on a magnificent scale." The series, however, proved too uncompromising even for *Garo*'s normally adventurous readers, and it was dropped before completion. Wehara has since collaborated with Takashi Nemoto on the exuberantly messy, full-color manga "Oiwa," which was serialized in the Japanese porn magazine *Junjo Angel.*

HIDESHI HINO entered the world on April, 19, 1946, less than a year after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The fact of the bomb lingers over his entire manga output. Following high school, Hino wandered from job to job, working at one time or another at a tropical fish store, a printing company, as a janitor, etc. Influenced by manga's two great visionary artists, Shigeru Sugiura and Yoshiharu Tsuge, Hino decided that this popular form would be the best way for him, too, to express himself. A story entitled "Cold Sweat" was his first published work, appearing in the October 1967 issue of *Com*. Hino's expressionistic, postnuclear tragedies are both brutal and deeply moving. The ongoing theme, in his words, is "the darkness of people's minds, which to me is a horror." His tales have been collected into a number of volumes, including *Zoruku's Strange Disease, Red Snake, Panaroma of Hell,* and *Hell Baby*. English translations of the latter two have been published in America by Blast Books. Hino is currently pursuing a study of the traditional Japanese martial arts, Budoh and Bushido (the code of the Samurai).

NEKOJIRU A Pynchonesque figure in the world of manga, Nekojiru prefers to keep her true identity a mystery. There are no known photos and no keys to her past history. Though it is known that Nekojiru is a woman, believed to be in her late twenties, the maturity of the artist's craft would suggest a much older person. What is certain is that this mangaka, whose collaborative work with her husband, Hajime Yamano, first surfaced in *Garo* in 1990, has created a splendidly realized world of the imagination, filled with the feverish visions of childhood and the inevitability of myth. Her constant protagonists—two cats, brother and sister—are rendered with a disarming innocence, luring the unsuspecting reader into the web of her thrilling, supernatural tales.

SUZY AMAKANE Born March 20, 1956, in Tokyo, Suzy Amakane enjoyed manga as a child, especially "Tetsuwan Atom" (Astro Boy) and the wacky "gag" strips of Fujio Akatsuka. But it was seeing a David Hockney exhibition when Amakane was twenty that set him on the road to a life in painting. From 1978 to 1982 he attended the Tama Art University, one of Japan's most prestigious fine-arts schools. Though admittedly a poor student, Suzy has since gone on to a remarkably successful career in both the fine and commercial arts. His early paintings parodied, with impressive skill, the styles and themes of his beloved masters, Hockney, Johns, Lichtenstein, and Magritte, and yet they remained uniquely indebted to the ebullient manga he read as a child. Suzy has since developed a sensuous and playful style all his own. His pictures—many of them featuring the wide-eyed scamp shown squatting on the front cover of *Comics Underground Japan*—teem with visual puns and pop-culture allusions. As well as having his work shown in magazines, on TV, and on CD jackets and labels, Suzy Amakane has been in many solo and group exhibitions in both Japan and Australia.

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